War with devils

by

Isaac Ambrose

Originally published in 1769 by:
printed by Joseph Galbraith

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List Price: $20.99 USA

Title ID: 1587 - Edition ID: 1582 - Request ID: 1876
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WAR
WITH
DEVILS:
MINISTRATION OF, AND COMMUNION
WITH
ANGELS.

By Mr. ISAAC AMBROSE, Minister of the Gospel.

REV. xii. 7. And there was war in heaven, Michael and his
Angels fought against the Dragon, and the Dragon fought
and his Angels.

PSAL. cvi. 11, 12. He shall give his Angels charge over thee,
to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their
hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

GLASGOW:
Printed by JOSEPH GALBRAITH AND COMPANY, and
to be sold at their Printing-office in Paul's Clofs
above the Cross. M, DCC, LXIX.
TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE,
Sir ORLANLO BRIDGEeman, Lt.
Lord Chief Justice of his Majesty's Court
of Common Pleas.

RIGHT HONOURABLE,
I have known you from your childhood; and
when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith
which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois, and your
mother Eunice, (if I may so call her of pious memo-
ry) and I am persuaded in you also, 2 Tim. i. 5. a-
bincunabulis. I cannot but comfortably hope, that
the same seed of God sown in your heart by the Spi-
rit so early, doth still remain, and abide in you to this
very day: Many changes have you seen and run thro'
in these few days of the years of your pilgrimage,
and yet I hear the same faith, and love, and spirit of
moderation continue with you as at the first, and in-
crease in you daily, like the rivers drawing nearer to
the ocean. My heart rejoiceth in this good report,
and I know not what more to beg of God for you as
truly necessary in this world, than that you may a-
Bound in these graces of faith in Christ, love to the
saints, and moderation towards all men. In setting
the first grace, you look heaven-wards; in the second,
on those that are heavenly; in the third, on the di-
vided interests of them who shall study and practise
mutual forbearance, and condescension towards each
other. Oh that in this last day we had many more
imitators of his Majesty that now is, or of you that
walk in the steps of so gracious a Sovereign! It is ob-

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served that in the primitive times, while the church was still known by its faith, and love, and moderation, and sweetness of deportment towards all its members, that on the contrary, the Arians and Donatists, and such like, were still dividing and separating, and rigorously imposing on others unnecessary things. If I may speak without offence to any, were it not happy with us, if all that agree in substantial and essentials of religion, would make it their main work to prefs faith and holiness, and allow a liberty to each other in indifferent things? Were all as sensible of the advantage we give the common enemy (I mean the Papists) as I am, that live and reside amongst them, I suppose we should be more willing to unite ourselves, and to bear the burdens of one another in love. It was a working meditation of St. Jerome, That whatever he did, he thought still he heard that sound of the trumpeter, Arise ye dead and come to judgment, Phil. iv. 5. The same meditation is held forth to us to persuade us to unity, or at least to moderation, Let your moderation be known unto all men, the Lord is at hand, Rom. xiv. 17. It were sad when he comes, he should find us smiting our fellow-servants, Matth. xxiv. 49. Oh that rather we may cherish one another, and help one another to promote these essential duties wherein the kingdom of God especially consists, viz. righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, Rom. xiv. 17. These are the things wherein you were trained, and wherein you profited, and which I hope and desire you will promote to your dying day. O that that golden rule were written on the doors of all Christian’s hearts, Follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart, 2 Tim. ii. 22. We have enemies enough to wrestle with, even a-
gainst principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickednesses in heavensies: and we have many friends that wait upon us, and minister to us, and persuade us in their spiritual and mysterious way to those essential duties of peace and patience, gentleness and meekness; of both these you will read in the following treatise; and they will lead you on to another duty of looking unto Jesus, wherein if we spend all the time we can spare for such a contemplation, we shall find work enough besides unneccessaries, to busy our minds and consciences upon; and surely blessed is that servant, (let the world say what it will) whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing, Matth. xxiv. 46. I know you are full-handed with several high and necessary employments; I resolve therefore to make no long epistle: If you please to patronize the following work of War with Devils, and Communion with Angels; both which I hope you will find consonant to holy scriptures, I shall be yet more engaged to acknowledge myself, and to remain,

Your Honour's

Humble, faithful Servant in Christ,

ut olim, ut semper,

ISAAC AMBROSE.
To the Christian Reader.

Amongst the means, duties, ordinances, which I did discover in their right method, manner, and proceedings, I observed three ordinances made little use of, tho' most necessary. The first is war with devils, held forth in Eph. vi. 12. The second is ministration of, and communion with angels, held forth in Heb. i. 4. The third is looking unto Jesus, held forth in Heb. xiii. 2. These three have some suityablenesf among themselves, and accordingly I have observed some suityablenesfs in this work: In themselves it is suitable that war with devils should have encouragement from holy angels, and yet that we should not stay here, or dwell on them, but look a little further, and rest on nothing on this side Jesus Christ. In the work, I have first enlarged by way of preface on each duty; I see they are ordinances little practised or made use of, and therefore I thought a confirmation of each duty, and a persuasion to it, as well as direction in it, was not altogether labour in vain: In the direction itself, I have followed each one from first to last: War with devils begins with the beginning of our life, and continues to death: Ministration of, and communion with angels begins at the beginning, and continues till the end of this world, or resurrection-day: Looking unto Jesus begins with eternity, and continues to eternity; it minds what was before the world was, and minds what shall be when time shall be no more. Now in that I have observed such a correspondence in all these ordinances, I thought it not amiss to join all those together; and tho' for the largeness they contain two volumes, yet to comprize them in one work.

Thou hast now my last works of practical divinity, that ever I mean to publish to the world; and if last words are wont to bear the greatest weight, and to make the deepest impression, much more let these last practical lines find some entertainment from thee for thy spiritual good. This (next to God's glory) is my chiefest end, and so I leave thee, and the book together to God's hands; may his Spirit inspire good motions, when thou readest my directions, and bring them to good issue. It is the prayer of,

Thy unworthy Friend, and
Servant in Christ's vineyard,
Isaac Ambrose.
WAR WITH DEVILS.

THE FIRST BOOK.

EPH. vi. 12. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the Rulers of the darkness of this World, against Spiritual Wickednesses in Heavens.

CHAP. I. SEC. I.

The Coherence and Division of the Words.

Amongst other exhortations, our apostle gives in this, Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, Eph. vi. 10. And to this end he propounds, 1. The means, Put on the whole armour of God, ver. 11. And, 2. The motives, drawn from a Christian’s fight and combat; wherein is, 1. The kind of combat; called wrestling, we wrestle. 2. The combatants themselves, to wit, Christians and devils; we are the defendants, and they are the affilants: They, who are they? 1. Negatively, or comparatively, not flesh and blood. 2. Affirmatively, or positively, principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness in this world, and spiritual wickedness in (or about) heavens.

SEC. II.

Of the several Doctrines deduced from the words.

From every part we may deduce a several doctrine: As, 1. Our spiritual combat is a wrestling. 2. All God’s people are to be in the fight. Our enemies are more than flesh and blood. 4. They are mighty and malicious enemies that war against us, even principalities, powers, rulers, and spiritual wickednesses. My design is to insist on the first, only we shall begin with the three latter, and briefly say something of every one of them.

CHAP. II. SEC. I.

Of the first doctrine to be handled.

All God’s people are to be in the fight, We wrestle. This we is either exclusive or inclusive: 1. Exclusive,
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5. There is not the wicked. 2. Inclusive, but we that are saints, and the people of God.

1. Not the wicked; they serve not in this war; instead of fighting the Lord's battles, they spend their time in chambering and wantonness, in lusts and uncleannesses, in carelessness and idleness; they sleep in security, they make no resistance for they are altogether ignorant of Satan's assaults. Oh that men's eyes were opened! Oh that such men would know they are none of the we in this text! they are not the Lord's soldiers, but the devil's revellers; and therefore they fight not against him, nor will he fight against them: for they have made a covenant with death, and with hell are they at agreement, Is. xxviii. 15.

2. All the saints must be in this fight, We wrestle. I Paul, and you Ephesians, and all God's people from first to last. First for Paul himself, I have fought a good fight, 2 Tim. iv. 7. and then for Paul and others jointly; 'for 'tho' we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh, 'for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty 'through God to the pulling down of strong holds,' 2 Cor. x. 3, 4. Or if we may bring in the examples of God's saints in all ages, Adam had his combat, Job his temptations; Moses, and Aaron, and Lot, and David, and all the patriarchs, and all the prophets, had their several onsets: Nor was it thus only before Christ's time, but since his coming; Peter was winnowed, Paul was buffeted; the Hebrews endured a great fight of affliction, Heb. x. 32. and Timothy was encouraged by Paul, 'Thou, O man of God, fly these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness, fighting the good fight of faith,' 1 Tim. vi. 11, 12. But to what purpose should I insist? Never was there any member of Christ's church, who was not exercised with this Christian warfare: Not Adam in innocency; not the apostles of Christ; no, nor Christ himself, when he was upon earth, 'Then was 'Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tem' 'ted of the devil,' Mat. iv. 1.

SECT. II. Ufe.

Ufe 1. A RE all God's people to war with devils? then consider all of you what religion will cost you:

You
War with Devils.

You that are strangers, know, that a Christian soldier must endure hardness; Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 2 Tim. ii. 3. Saints must be winnowed, and buffeted, and tried, and tempted; sharp war, sudden violent, dreadful dangers, are the portion of God's people; They must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God, Acts xiv. 22, they must proceed from one action into another. Was it not Paul's case? How was he in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in death oft, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by countrymen, in perils by heathens, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils amongst false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness, 2 Cor. xi. 23, 26, 27. Certainly Christianity is not so easy as many take it to be. I speak not these things to dissuade any, but to awaken all, and to advise all to cast up their accounts, and to be resolved men.

Use 2. Are we to fight with devils? then courage, Christians! you that are of the right stamp, of the number of this we. O be not dejected because of the enemy, but be you of good heart! What, are you afraid of Satan's fiery darts? know they are but as the waves toshing the air, yet saving Noah; or as the whale swallowing up, yet preferring Jonah; or as the dragon pursuing the woman, yet procuring her great preservation; or as the file grating the iron, yet making it clearer and brighter than before; or as the mill grinding the wheat, yet making it useful; or as the coals heating perfume, yet making it thereby more odoriferous. You say this war is troublesome; this indeed is Jacob's voice, for never an Elau complained thus: But do you feel your spirits sharpened, your pride depressed, your flesh cooled, your old man destroyed, your new man renewed day by day? Tell me, are not you provoked to more earnest and ardent prayers by this war? Do not you accustom yourselves to more patience, as now experiencing the fragility and frowardness of your natures? Are not Satan's temptations as thorns in your ways to keep you from straying and running wrong? O then be you not afraid!
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afraid! come, enter into the lists and fight valiantly: it
an honest war; Christ invites you to it, and he will lea
you, and never never leave you in it; what needs more
be strong, and of a good courage.

C H A P. III.

Of the Second Doctrine and Uses.

O R enemies are more than flesh and blood, We wres-
tle, but with whom? Negatively, Not with flesh
and blood; or rather comparatively, not only, or not so
much with flesh and blood. By flesh and blood is either
meant man, as having a bodily substance consisting of flesh
and blood; or our bosom corruptions, so often called in
scripture flesh. The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and
sometimes flesh and blood, as flesh and blood hath not re-
vealed this, and Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom
of God, Gal. v. 17. Mat. xvi. 17. 1 Cor. xv. 20.

1. If by flesh and blood be meant the former, it hints to
us our weak and infirm natures; q.d. Our adversaries are not
such as we are, they are not poor, weak, inconsiderable.
enemies. When the Lord speaks of our frail condition,
he gives it the like expression: My Spirit shall not always
strive with man, for that he also is flesh, Gen. vi. 3. and
the prophet Isaiah hath the same expression concerning the
Egyptians, Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and
their horses flesh, and not spirit, Isa. xxxi. 3. In this sense
the apostle removes the usual militia, or more tolerable
conflicts: q.d. We wrestle not so much with man, as
with devils; we wrestle not only, or chiefly with flesh and
blood, weak, frail, foolish, visible or mortal creatures; a-
las! What are they? the enemies that we fight with are
more than flesh and blood, more envious, malicious, fur-
ious, dangerous, numerous, more subtile, powerful, ev-
ery way fearful: And therefore in comparison, we wrestle
not with flesh and blood; we matter not man, we mean
no such combatants.

Use. Here then I must leave our martial men, whose
war is with flesh and blood, and 'tis well if it be not on-
ly with flesh and blood, and nothing else. The apostle's
question needs but application, ' From whence come wars
and fightings, among you, come they not hence, even of
your
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* your lufts that war in your members?* James iv. 1. q. d. You have wars and fightings among yourselves, if they were only with foreign enemies, they were more tolerable; civil wars are ever worst, and whence are these? are they not of a base original and descent, of the lineage of luft? O the covetousness, pride and ambition that is amongst you! O the loathing, rejection and disobedience of the gospel of Christ! O the dear and high esteem, advancement and vile embracement of the interest of this present world! Do not worldly, private interests bear the sway? and what are these but lufts? and what are the effects of lufts, but wars and fightings amongst yourselves? In way of application; Oh that I could but truly say, We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against devils! or, Oh that I could not truly say, We wrestle not against devils, but only against flesh and blood, But my design is not to intermeddle with outward wars, it is a more inward and spiritual work I have in hand.

1. If by flesh and blood be meant the latter, viz. our bolom corruptions, it hints to us our strong enemies, strong indeed, q. d. We have enemies within us; do we not feel how the flesh lufteth against the Spirit? And are not these enemies as the sons of Zeruiah, too hard for us? But that is not all, for Satan who is yet stronger, strikes in with the flesh, and by this means we wrestle not only with flesh and blood, naked corruptions, but with Satan in them; our flesh is strong, but when it is edged with Satan’s policy, and backt by Satan’s power, Oh how strong is it then?

This enemy within us, the Holy Ghost decipherers by many names; it is called the old man; the old Adam; the earthly, carnal, natural man; the sin which is inherent, and dwelleth in us; the adjoining evil; the law of the members; the lufts of the flesh which fight against the soul. By all which is signified our corruption of nature, derived from our first parents, whereby we are made backward to all good, and prone to all evil. *Every man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own concupiscence, and is enticed; and when luft hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, it bring-
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'et th forth death,' James i. 14, 15. The apostle here intimates, that as Satan is the father, so flesh is the mother of sin, which receiving Satan's temptations into a fruitful womb, it doth conceive, nourish, and bring forth sin; and when sin is born, like a deadly slaying serpent, it brings forth death both to body and soul, unless the poison thereof be took away by the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

Use. And what, my brethren, are our enemies more than flesh and blood? Oh the sad condition of men that provide not for this war? Christians, how doth it concern you to stand upon your guard, and to be in use of all means against flesh and blood? If a city were besieged with foreign forces, and they within knew that they harboured home-bred traitors, would they not lay hands on them, and put them to death? My brethren, your souls are as cities besieged with all the power and policies of devils, and you have within you home-bred enemies, even your own flesh and blood, these seek all occasions to betray your souls into devils hands; Is it not time then to mortise the flesh, and lufts thereof? Is it not time then to implore the aid and assistance of God's Spirit whereby you may be strengthened and enabled to slay those lufts, which war against the soul: These are in some respects more dangerous and pernicious than devils themselves; they are within your bosoms, and like secret traitors, they open the city gates, yea, they disarm you of your weapons, and lay you naked to Satan's invasions and temptations. Probable it is, that Satan could never vanquish you, unless the flesh, and the lufts thereof did betray you into his hands: Probably his policy could never circumvent you, unless the secret traitors did give him continual intelligence of all advantages. Sure I am, the devil is but an outward cause of sin, he cannot compel or force you to sin, but your lufts help on; Oh then, how should you watch over your bosom corruptions, and be in use of all means for the mortifying of this flesh and blood.

C H A P. IV.

Of the third Doctrine.

They are mighty and malicious enemies that war against us, even principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness
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1. Principalities, they are not only princes, but principalities in the abstract; it sets forth the eminency of their government, above all the princes in the world: Other princes rule in some parts, but Satan rules over all the earth; hence sometimes he is called Prince of the world, John xiv. 30. and sometimes the god of this world, 2 Cor. iv. 4. He could tell Jesus Christ, that all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them were delivered unto him, and to whomsoever he would, he gave them, Luke iv. 6, 7. Do not say that the devil spake truth to Christ; for the world was not his either in possession or disposition; for possession, the earth is the Lord's, and all that is therein is; the world, and all that dwell therein, Psal. xxiv. 1. and for disposition, it is God's prerogative and peculiar, By me kings reign, Prov. xviii. 15. All powers that are, are ordained of God, Rom. xiii. 1. He maketh low, and he maketh high, it is the Most High that beareth rule over the kingdoms of men, Dan. iv. 12. Yet this we grant, that Satan is truly called the prince of the world as it is corrupted; when the world departed from God to his adversary, God in justice gave Satan leave to prevail and rule in the sons of disobedience; and thus devils are princes, or in the abstract principalities over all the earth.

2. Powers. They are not only powerful, but powers in the abstract; i.e. they are clothed and filled with a mighty power: Were devils princes only in their title, and had no power, the title could not carry it; we little esteem of sounds, syllables and words. Have we not seen what the sword can do without a title, and how empty the title is without the sword? Well, but devils have both; as they are principalities, so they are powers; they are the princes of the power. What this power is, is past my telling, only if we look in the world, we may find it wonderful in several parts of it. As,

1. For the elementary part of the world: What element is it, that he hath not power over. 1. Fire is the element prepared
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prepared for him; and he can (let it loose) send it down contrary to its nature from heaven to earth. Thus one of the messengers told Job, 'The fire of God is fallen from heaven,' and hath burnt up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them, and I only am escaped alone to tell thee,' Job i. 16. It is called the fire of God, though caus'd by Satan; it was not God, but Satan that was the immediate kindler of it; and yet called the fire of God, because of the strangeness of the fire; it was a wonderful, great and extraordinary fire; some think it was a flash of lightening, and it is more probable, because it is said to fall down from heaven. 'Satan can do mighty things, command much in that magazine of heaven, where the dreadful artillery, the fiery meteors, which make men tremble, are lodged and stored up, (faith Caryl.) For instance, he can discharge the great ordinance of heaven, thunder and lightning; and by his art, he can make them more terrible and dreadful than they are in nature. 2. The air is his own element, wherein now he reigneth; he is 'Prince of the power of the air,' Eph. ii. 2. i.e. of the airy dominion or principedom. The Jews have a tradition, that all the space between the earth and the firmament is full of troops of evil spirits, their chieftains having their residence in the air. Augustine and Jerome tell us, that this was the opinion of all the primitive doctors: Now if there they are as princes, and have power, no wonder they can violently move the air, and cause tempests and storms. Thus another messenger told Job, 'There came a great wind from the wilderness, smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead,' Job i. 19. Satan being left to his own dispose, can raise and enrage storms and tempests. I believe (faith Caryl) 'Satan cannot raise so much wind by his own power, and at his own pleasure, as will weave a feather; but when God faith, Go and do such things, then he can raise wind enough to move mountains, and raise the foundations of the proudest and strongest buildings.' Thus Job's children were buried in the ruins of their house, 'by a puff (as one calls it) of the devil's mouth.' 3. 'The water is an element commanded by him; he can trouble the seas, and cause such waves and'
and billows to arise, as shall swallow up ships and men; he can make such furies as shall swell over banks. It is Mr. Gurnall's expression, 'He can hurl the sea into such commotion, that the depths shall boil like a pot, as if heaven and earth would meet.' I cannot but think the devil was in that storm, when the waves beat into the ship where Christ slept, for being awoke, 'He rebuked the wind, and saith unto the sea, peace, be still.' (Phimothetis) a word that sometimes he utters to the devil, Luke iv. 35. q. d. be smukled Satan, thou stirrest these waves, (Mark iv. 39.) had my disciples believed, as they should have done, thou hadst not done this. By faith Satan avoids, and by difference Satan re-enters, and is full of rage. 4. The earth is his element over which he rangeth; when the Lord asked him, 'Whence comest thou Satan? he answered from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it,' Job i. 7. Satan here speaks like a prince that had gone about his countries to view his provinces, his kingdoms and cities, I come (faith he) from visiting my several places and dominions. And though his intent be to devour men, yet in reference to this very element, he can cause earth quakes, throw down the strongest buildings, root up the best settled trees, and move all things.

2. For the sensible part of the world, he can enter into the bodies of beasts, and set them at his pleasure. We have one notable instance of a legion of devils, entering into an herd of swine, and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea (they were about 2000) and were choked in the sea,' Matth. v. 13. An easy thing it is with Satan to hurry up and down the bodies of beasts, and to make them with violence rush hither and thither. And they have no less power on the bodies of men; have they not possessed them, and made them lunatic, and so vexed them, that they have oftentimes fallen into the fire, and oftentimes in to the water?' Mat. xvii. 15. Nay, have they not made some deaf and dumb, dashing and tearing them, till they foamed and gnashed with their teeth, and even pined away? Or (if I may say more) have they not sometimes carried and hurried up and down even in the air, the bodies of men? I could instance in that crowded body of
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Christ, whom the devil took up into the holy city, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple; and after took him up again into an exceeding high mountain, and there showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them,' Matth. iv. 5, 8. That Satan can transport the bodies of witches, many histories record; and that he can bewitch the bodies of unbelievers, none will deny; but the scripture speaks of a power that the devil hath over Christ's body, and elsewhere of a like power that he had over the bodies of the saints. Job is one instance, and the daughter of that woman of Canaan, that was a daughter of Abraham, may serve for another instance: and if the Lord should not restrain the malice and power of the adversary, we might have as many instances as there are men and women in the world.

3. For the souls of men, which we call the intellectual part of the world, He hath a great power over them. 1. He can work on the understanding; he can penetrate into the fancy, which is the organ of internal fancies, and move those phantasms he finds there, and by that means excite various thoughts in the understanding, and perforce to this or that. Do we not experience his power within us? do we not perceive evil thoughts injected into our minds against our wills; not that Satan imports any new thing into our minds, which he found not in our fancies before. It is usually delivered in the schools, That the devil cannot put into the fancy new species of things, and such as the fancies had never any knowledge of; as he cannot make a man born blind, to dream of colours, and their differences. But he can make many compositions and deductions of those various phantasms he finds within, and accordingly move the understanding to this or that. 2. He can move the will; I cannot say that absolutely he can determine it. The bowing, bending, and turning and forming of the will effectually is only proper to God; yet can the devil act something as towards the will, and his acting carries a kind of power with it, tho' God only can determine it. The will may be said to be moved or bowed two ways, either inwardly or outwardly. The internal mover or agent, is either our own natural inclination and propensity to its object,
object, or God himself who is the author of that inclination: Now in this way, there is nothing can move the will but God and ourselves. The external mover or principle, is either the object propounded to the will, the understanding having apprehended it as good; or the affections and concupiscence which reside in the sensitive appetite, for by them is the will often seduced, and drawn to consent. Very passions can make that many things which are evil, may seem good to the will, and so incline it to embrace them. Now this is certain, that devils can propound an object; and they can move, and trouble, and affect our passions; they can stir up wrath, pride, covetousness, lusts, in men; and therefore externally they cannot move the will.

3. The rulers of the darkness of this world. These words hold forth the proper seat of the devil's empire; he is not lord over all, that is the incomunicable title of God, but ' a ruler of the darkness of this world.' Where the time and place, and subjects of his empire are set down and limited.

1. The time when he rules, it is during the time of this world. Immediately after Adam's fall he began his rule, and while the world stands he will continue it without any change or alteration. Here is a difference between the devil and any human power; for these have but a short time. The same man that rules now, will be dethroned within a few days, or months, or years, by death if not by treason: Or suppose his line, or model of government continue longer, yet someobserve that scarce any rule continues in one form above 600 years continuance. See Abraham's time from the promise of his seed, to the giving of the law 430 years; see Israel's time from their going out of Egypt to the building of the temple 480 years; see David's time from the anointing of him king to the death of Zedekiah 470 years; what say we to our kingdoms? Caesar's time betwixt his invasion and the rule of Valentinian 500 years; the Saxons time betwixt their heptarchy and Egbert's monarchy 460 years; the Norman's time and the union of whole Britain 536 years. On what unhurried is majesty possest, that within a few year's time, so much is altered? But the devil hath a longer time, even so long as the world lasts, from the beginning to the end, until time shall be
no more. Indeed when the frame of this world shall be taken down, then shall the devil be degraded, his crown taken off, his sword broken over his head, and he himself become a close prisoner in hell. In the mean time he rules, and he will rule during the time of this present world.

2. The place where he rules, it is here in this world below. He was a bright angel in heaven, and he sometimes ruled there; but he would not keep in his own chair of estate, and therefore aspiring higher, he fell down to this nether world, and here now he rules. In the air, and here about the earth, devils have their mansions, and here they tempt, seduce, and do all the mischief they can do to the sons of men. I know it is our sadness and trouble, that they are amongst us: Wo, wo, wo to the inhabitants of the earth in this respect, Rev. viii. 13 and yet here is the joy of the saints, they have no power or rule in heaven, whereas they are fallen, and where the saints happiness must for ever be: Well may this make us long for heaven, whilst we are on earth. Soldiers in tedious and dangerous voyages cannot but desire earnestly after victory. Oh (may we think) how welcome will triumph, and leading captivity captive be after war! As the hopes of a safe haven is to the mariners tossed up and down in troublesome seas; so is heaven to Christians, whose life in this world is a warfare. O friends, look after heaven, for on earth is many a snare, and many a gin, and many a plot of Satan to undo your souls, and to subject you to his rule.

3. The subjects or persons whom he rules; they are the darkness of this world, i.e. such as have no life of grace, no light of knowledge; for by darkness is meant such who are in darkness, and they are of two sorts: First, Those who are in a state of sin, called the work of darkness. 2dly, Those who are in a state of ignorance compared to darkness; 'Ye sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord,' Eph. v. 11. and v. 8. But I am discovering the prince or ruler, and not his vassals; and therefore I shall pretermit this title, and come to the next.

4. Spiritual wickednesses. They are not styled wicked spirits, or spiritual wicked ones; but in the abstract, spiritual wickednesses. Oh, what enemies are these? They
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They are spirits and not bodies. If we had only to deal with flesh and blood, whether men or beasts, it were not so very much, though very terrible. But we wrestle, not with flesh and blood, but with spiritual substances, with invisible spirits. An arm of flesh against poor fleshly creatures were enough to startle us; Oh, what startling, frighting work have we within these very few years? But how much more startling is an arm of spirits that can reach to spirits? That know how to fight with us at all times, in all conditions, in all postures; whether we are alone or in company, idle or employed, sleeping or waking? That can fight invisibly, when we cannot see them; for as their nature, so are their assaults: Such as by the eyes of flesh and blood cannot be seen. 2. They are wickednesses, as by nature they are spirits, so by their condition they are evil and malicious spirits; spiritual wickednesses, or spirits of wickedness, i.e. most monstrously wicked and malicious spirits. Some observe that the devil hath his name (G. Panera) the wicked one, to denote his spiteful nature; he is not barely wicked, but maliciously wicked; he cannot endure that souls of men should fare any better than himself; and therefore he makes it his trade, his delight, his main work to damn souls. 3. Some yet go higher, saying, that these spiritual wickednesses are such, as provoke men to wickednesses of a spiritual nature; we wrestle, (faith apostle) against whom? it is in the original (pros to pneumatika tes generias), i.e. against the spirituals of wickedness; as if these wicked spirits should make it their great design, not only to befet us with grofs and fleshly sins, but with sins spiritualized, or with spiritual wickednesses, such as unbelief, pride, hypocrisy, idolatry, blasphemy, &c. As black as devils are, they can, if they will, appear as angels of light, and accordingly suit their temptations of the finest make.

But what is meant by the last word, in heavenliness? I cannot say, heavenly places, but heavenly things: As if the apostle should say, the cause of this fight is not for earthly things, it is an otherwise quarrel than is usual with us in our battles. Devils will not fight for lands or livings, for riches or mines of gold, but for heavenly things; they
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I would, if they could, bereave us of our God, our Saviour, Father, of all our hopes of salvation, and glory of heaven.

SECT. II.

ARE devils thus mighty and malicious? then mind this, consider what enemies you must set against. Methinks a serious consideration of their power should raise up your hearts to bless God that keeps you from them. Oh the mighty advantage they have over you! Should the Lord but give the chain, what would they make in the world? How would they shake the heavens, shake the earth, undo all men and women in the world in an instant? My brethren, I would not have you dread them too much; and yet because they are so mighty malicious enemies, I would not have you frighten too much. I tell you there is nothing in this inferior world able to stand before them, no creature, no man, good angels indeed can match and master devils; but God stop his angels, and withdraw his hand, they would over-run, unquiet, unsettle all the world. Oh then be taught such apprehensions of their greatness, as that you for ever bless that God who binds up such enemies, they do not the mischief unto which their nature in them, and enables them.

Are devils mighty and malicious? then let all temptations fly to God, and rely on his power; be they never so mighty, yet the Lord only is Almighty; he hath all devils in a chain, and he hazırlaneth or enlargeth it as he pleaseth. His power is not only in heaven, but on earth, and in and here is the hope of saints, here is their tower of ; He that dwelleth in the secret places of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. That God's people would in all danger have to their trust that they would fly of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in him will I trust. But of this nature we shall bring into the next point, that I hasten.

CHAP. V. SECT. I.

Of the main Doctrine intended.

A spiritual combat is a wrestling, Estin enim e pole, here is a wrestling to us; or we wrestle; [pole]
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Writ viiur, quia corpus [palletai. id est, quasitut. The Greek word, according to the proper notation of it, signifies such a strife as maketh the body of him that striveth to shake; and howsoever sometimes it is given to a strife of sport; yet here it is used for a serious and fierce fight and combat: so fierce as it may well make the soul shake again.

But why is this combat called a wrestling?

1. Because Satan's fight is very close. This is the nature of wrestling, not to fight at a distance, but very near; Satan is so near that he cloeth with us; yea, gets within us. He takes hold of the heart within, the soul within. Other wrestlers may catch at the head, or arms, or thighs, or they may fold their arms about the middle of the body, and strive with it; but Satan is a spirit, and enters into spirits; his wrestling is so close, that neither understanding, will, affections, nor anything within can escape his fangs.

2. Because this fight is very violent; wrestling is not an easy, lazy, idle combat. They that wrestle do it with their might, and strength, and utmost vigour. So deals Satan with us, he goes about as a roaring lion, 2 Pet. v. 8. As he is very active to do mischief, he puts to his strength to devour souls: And accordingly must we deal with Satan; finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, Eph. vi. 11. As we must take heaven by violence, so we must escape hell by violence; devils are not to be dallied withal; we must quit ourselves like men; resist unto blood.

3. Because this fight hath in it many wrenches, windings, wiles, and arts. The cunning wrestler carries it not merely with his strength, but with his feet; his eye is upon all advantages; with a wrench, a turn, a trip, a sleight, he gets the mastery. Satan in this respect is an eminent wrestler; he makes it his trade, and is well acquainted with all the mysteries of it. He hath thousands and ten thousands of stratagems and wiles. He hath his batbe and normata, as the apostle calls them, 1 Cor. ii. 12, that is, his depths, his profound plots and contrivances, moulded by malice and subtlety in his own large understanding, furnished with the experience of our corruptions, and the success of his many temptations for some thousands of years,
years, managed with all the crafts and policies of the most
dark and hidden corners of hell. He hath his *methodaias*,
as they are called, Eph. vi. 11. exquisite methods, in the
wily conveyance of his stratagems, in ordering his assaults,
and spitting his fiery darts. And is it not our duty and
prudence to be well skilled in his wiles, and to counter-
work him in his crafts; are we not therefore advised to put
on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand
against the wiles of the devil? Eph. vi. 11. As there is no
standing without armour, so there is no fear of falling if
we are but armed and prepared for him; his wiles should
make us wise unto salvation, that tho’ he wrestle artificially
with us, we may be able to stand.

4. Because in this combat each party hath usually his
sides or seconds. It is thus both with Satan and us. 1.
He hath his aids; these are led under the conduct of these
two captain-generals the world and the flesh. This world
is the devil’s darling, and chief champion. On the right
hand it encounters us with prosperity, it casts before us the
golden apples of riches, and how prone we are to listen to
these Syren-songs, our experience tells us. On the left
hand it tempts us by adversity, turning its smiles into
frowns, its allurements into threats, its offers of honours
and riches to proud menacings of poverty and ignominy;
and how terrible these are in the eyes of flesh and blood,
the best hearts can tell. The flesh is the devil’s darling,
by which we understand the corruption of nature; it fights
eth and lusteth against the spirit, it rebels against the law
of our mind, and leadeth us captive to the law of sin.
* The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit lusteth
* against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the
* other; so that we cannot do the same things that we
* would,’ Gal. v. 17. Rom. vii. 19. Both these are Satan’s
aids. 2dly, We have our aids: As God first takes our
part, and he hath appointed his own Son as general of the
field, called the Captain of our salvation, Heb. ii. 10.
Whenever we wrestle, he stands by with a reserve, as
it were, for our relief at a pinch, and if we will but call
upon him at our need, he will never leave us, fail us, nor
forfeit us, 2. The angels take our part: Behold the cha-
riots
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riots of fire upon the mountains round about Elisha. Wrestlers are usually compact with a ring, and such a ring have saints; ‘The angels of the Lord encamp round about them that fear him, and they deliver them,’ Psal. xxxiv. 7. Now what better aids or secords can we have than the angels of God, and the God of angels? Surely there are more for us than can be against us: Oh the comfort of this!

S E C T. II.

Use of Terror.

Is our spiritual combat a wrestling? then woe to the wicked, that never wrestle at all: Let them know, that they are not the Lord's soldiers, but the devil's revellers, and therefore he fights not against them, because they are his friends; ‘When the strong armed man (Satan) keep-eth his palace, his goods are in peace,’ Luke xi. 20. but when a stronger than he cometh to dispossefs him, there will be many a ruffle, and many a wrestle, and usually such a man will feel the conflict. Now woe to them that are at ease in Zion, Amos vi. 1. Can we be God's servants and not his soldiers? Is not Christ's church on earth a truly militant church? in a warfare as well as wayfare? Oh then what is their condition that are rid only by the devil? they will not grapple with Satan, they love to sleep in a whole skin, they crown themselves with pleasant garlands of restful security, they imagine they may go to heaven in a bed of down: Oh but what will be the end of these men? The devil hath already laid them on their backs, and there remains nothing more but to kick them out of their security into hell.

S E C T. III.

Use of Encouragement.

Is our spiritual combat a wrestling? then courage, Christians, from these words, Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, Eph. vi. 10. One rightly observes, That the Christian of all men needs courage; a cowardly spirit is beneath the lowest duty of a Christian: The fearful are in the forlorn of those that march for hell, the violent and valiant are they who take heaven by force; except thou canst prove thy pedigree by an heroic spirit, except thou wilt dare to be holy in spight of men and devils, never
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never think that thou art begotten of God. O how un
comely a sight is it, a bold sinner and a fearful sain! one
resolved to be wicked, and a Christian wavering in his ho-
ly course! to see hell keep the field, impudently braving
it with displayed banners of open profaneness; and saints to
hide their colours for shame, or to run from them for fear,
who should rather wrap themselves in them, and die upon
the place. Gurnall's Christian Armour:

Take courage therefore, O ye saints and be strong!
When Joshua was to march before Israel into Canaan, the
Lord was fain to raise up his spirit with redoubled words,
'Be strong and of a good courage. Only be thou strong
and very courageous; Have not I commanded thee? be
strong and of a good courage, be not afraid, neither be
thou dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee, wher-
soever thou goest,' Josh. i. 6, 7. I say the same to
you, who are to march thro' this wilderness into the hea-
venly Canaan. Take courage, for the Lord your God is
with you: What if devils come behind and trip up your
heels? Nay, what if they fly in your faces, and grapple
with you hand to hand? Any weak David may wrestle
with Goliath, so long as the battle is the Lord's, and that
he comes to the field in the name of the Lord of hosts, the
God of Israel. But motives I shall reserve for the next
ue.

S E C T. IV.

Use of Exhortation with Motives.

Is your spiritual combat a wrestling? Come then, fall on
the duty; there's a world of devils ready to encounter
you may imagine, and really it is so, that they come swiftly,
furiously, strongly, their arms spread wide, and their
fangs are open, and if they can, they will fasten on the
whole man; their aim is to throw body, soul, and all into
hell. What will you do now? will you turn your back
and fly? Shall the devil conquer without a stroke? No,
God forbid. I beseech you stretch forth your arms, bid
devils defiance, and resist them to your utmost, wrestle
with all your might. Why, this is the duty I am press-
ing on you: Be serious and wrestle, though all shake by
it. The motives are several. As,

1. There
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1. There is a necessity for it; either you must wrestle with him, or be taken captive by him; there is no middle course; and shall not necessity make you fight? It is said that necessity and despair will produce wonders, they would make cowards fight, and are you worse than cowards.

2. The victory is certain if you will but wrestle. When Christ had made a valiant resistance the devil gave way and left him, Mark iv. 11. And to this purpose you have a promise, Resist the devil, and he will flee from you, James iv. 7. Satan is a foiled adversary, Christ hath overcome him already, and so shall ye if ye will but valiantly enter in Christ's name into the lists.

3. The sweetness of victory will abundantly recompense the trouble of your wrestling: Usually we mistake the traverses of our minds: We reckon upon the sweetness of sin, and the trouble of wrestling: But the right comparison is between the fruit of sin, and the fruit of victory: You have often had experience what it is to be overcome, do you now make trial how sweet the victory will be in overcoming.

4. The cause is just, your combat is lawful: God, who is justice itself, hath proclaimed it by his heralds; 'Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the assault of the devil,' Eph. vi. 10, 11. 'Resist the devil, and he will flee from you,' James iv. 7. 'Be sober and watch, for your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour; whom resist fidel and the faith,' 1 Pet. v. 8. There are two things which make a war lawful and just, 1. The call of a just authority. 2. A just cause: Now in this conflict is a concurrence of both. 1. You have a lawful authority calling you to fight, even God who is the authority supreme. 2. Your case is just; for Satan assaulting any of the children of God is a mere usurper, he hath no right over you, you are not his but the Lord's, by creation, by redemption, by special dedication. You do but defend your own souls, and the territory and dominion of God and Jesus Christ in you,
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1, and over you, whose dominion you are bound to preserve. Surely you have good cause to wrestle, if you had not this, because your cause is good.

5. You have already in baptism taken a military sacrament, and therein promised that you will continue God's faithful soldiers unto your life's end. What! my brethren, take preachers' money to serve in God's wars against the devil, and all his aids, and now to run away from your ours. A sworn enemy to sin and Satan should never all others turn his back; why, you are sworn enemies, therefore stand to it, be of a good courage, resist unbleed.

5. The Lord measures out your temptations, weigheth their strength, and will not suffer you to be tempted above you are able; he giveth shoulders, and fitteth the ten. Is not this his promise? 1 Cor. x. 13. 'There shall be no temptation taken you, but such as is moderate, common to man) but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but with the temptation also make way to escape, that may be able to bear it. Souls are apt to complain, the devil is strong, and temptation is strong, and I shall by the hand of Saul.' Why, know now that all temptations are weighed and measured out by God, he faith to Satan as to the waves of the sea, Thus shalt thou go, and no farther. Thus he said concerning; Behold Satan, all that he hath is in thy power, pon himself put not forth thy hand. Satan had a o have gone further, he would have been upon Job; if God had not flopt and curbed him: Certainly would break all our backs, if he were let alone, but ill not suffer it, for God hath set him bounds, and give you a proportionable strength. As a wife physiocrases not give the same physick to every person, but as every one's ability, so the Lord orders Satan in g, that he cannot put the least dram into any temper but as it is measured out by the hand of God.

He Lord hath promised his presence with you in six and in seven: He goeth out with you into the only as a looker-on, but to weaken the enemies and
and to supply you with new strength. He weakens your enemies, and upon this account partly it is said, 'That we are more than conquerors thro' Christ that loved us,' Rom. viii. 37. because that in and thro' Jesus Christ our enemy is overcome before he strikes, and his blow is broken as he strikes. 2. He supplies you with new strength, I will not deny but now and then you may have a foil, but if so, the Lord will raise you up again, 'For tho' we fall, yet shall we not be cast down, because the Lord putteth under his hand,' Psal. xxxvii. 24.

8. Your weapons are impenetrable: Your armour is the armour of proof, compleat armour, every way sufficient to defend and keep you harmless. This if you put it on, will make you able to stand against the wiles of the devil, and to withstand in the evil day; and to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, Eph. v. 11, 13, 16. If you say, What is this armour? the apostle tells you of a girdle of truth and a breast-plate of righteousness, and shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace, and a shield of faith, and a helmet of salvation, and a sword of the Spirit, praying always with all prayer and supplication of the Spirit, Eph. vi. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. The meaning is, that your armour is the graces and ordinances of Jesus Christ. Truth, and righteousness, and patience, and faith, and hope, and the word, and prayer; (under which by a synecdoche all other graces and ordinances are comprehended) are your spiritual armour. I know that all the virtue of this armour depends wholly upon God alone: Our faith, and hope, and love, and the word, and prayer would be all broken to shivers at one stroke of temptation, if the Lord did not establish and confirm them; and this is that which Christ tells Peter, I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, Luke xxii. 22. But this armour by God's power hath been successful, and in the power of his might it ever will be successful. What is said of the bow of Jonathan, and of the sword of Saul, is truly said of this armour in this respect, they never returned empty from the blood of the slain, and from the fat of the mighty, 2 Sam. i. 22. Surely never any harnessed with this armour of God, left the field finally. Oh what encourager this!
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9. To put all out of question, the Lord hath made promises of life to those that wrestle: 'He will give them to eat of the tree of life in the midst of paradise: He will give them of the manna that is hid, and he will write their names in the book of life. Blessed is he that endures temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive a crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him,' James i. 12. 'We do not contend for counters, but for crowns; and those not temporal and corruptible, but eternal and incorruptible, even for a crown of life,' 1 Cor. ix. 25.

10. There will be a day of triumph to all that will but wrestle: If you ask when? I answer, 1. At the day of judgment, then shall Christ your captain stand upon the earth, and you shall stand with him, glorying and triumphing to see your enemies dead, or wounded before you. Indeed others that were faint and delicate, and would not wrestle, as they were led captives by Satan at his pleasure, so shall they be led in triumph by him into hell: But for you that fight the Lord's battles, the day is a coming when you shall march with him into glory, and then shall you triumph all the way, and those enemies that now assault you, shall by dead, as it were, before you, and you shall see them again no more for ever. No sooner shall Christ and his saints enter into heaven, but oh! the glorious astonishing triumphs that will be there! The poet sung sweetly, 'There shall we conquer, have our conquest crown'd By hands of seraphims, triumph'd with the sound Of heaven's loud trumpet, warbled by the thrill Celestial quire, recorded with a quill Pluck'd from the pinion of an angel's wing, Confer'd with joy by heaven's eternal King.'

O my brethren, where is now your courage? where is your spirit? where is your ambition? think not on mean things, but on crowns, and victories, and glories; 'hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown,' Rev. iii. 11.

S E C T. V.

Other sorts of Motives.

THAT I may yet prevail with you to make you wrestlers, consider further, God
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1. God is on the side of all that wrestle. What! art thou afraid of the issue? Art thou indeed in Satan's hands? know then that Satan is in God's hands: If thou art but the Lord's soldier, he will not suffer himself to be so much disgraced as to suffer thee to be overcome by his mortal enemies: He hath armed thee with his own armour, and sent thee out to fight his battles; and therefore he will not have thee vanquished, being fortified with his strength; for so should his weapons be esteemed weak, and he himself be overcome in thee. When the Lord sent his angel to encourage Zechariah concerning Jerusalem, the message was this, I, faith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about her. Surely Jerusalem must needs be impregnable that was thus walled about: The same promise is made to all the saints, and therefore they must needs be all invincible; if your shelter were stones, these might be battered; were it walls of lead, these might be melted; were it defence of waters, these might be dried up; were it garrisons of mighty men, these might be scattered; were it engines of war, these might be defeated; were it trenches, these might be stopped; were it bulwarks, these might be overthrown. But you are guarded with such a defence which cannot be demolished, to wit, with a wall of fire round about you. Balls of wild fire are terror and consumption to any enemies. Who could quench the fire of Sodom? or who shall quench the world, when it shall be all on fire? Surely none. Paradise was kept with a fiery flaming sword, and none could enter thereinto, Gen. iii. 24. Israel was guided and protected by a fiery pillar, and none could molest them in their march, Exod. xiii. 21. What shall we say then, when the Lord our God is a wall of fire round about you, to consume your enemies and to succour you? Cheer up Christians! your God whose you are, and whom you serve, to whom nothing is too hard, Gen. xviii. 14, 'to whom nothing is impossible,' Matth. xix. 16, 'to whom none is like among the gods, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders,' Exod. xv. 11. 'Who removeth mountains, shaketh the earth, commandeth the sun, sealeth the stars, and thundereth marvelously with his voice; even he is a wall of fire round
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2. Jesus Christ is your captain; God hath made him general of the field, and if you had none other to fight for you, yet he alone is mightier than all your enemies. He hath already vanquished Satan, yea, he hath so bruised the serpent's head, that now he cannot overcome finally the least of his followers. Satan was the strong man who possessed all in peace; but our Saviour Christ, who is stronger than he, coming upon him, hath overcome him, and taken from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divided his spoils, Luke xi. 21, 22. Hence he is truly called our King, our Redeemer, our Head, our Captain; and will not you, the subjects of this King, the ransomed of this Redeemer, the members of this Head, the soldiers of this Captain, fight under his standard? Why consider, if you wrestle, Jesus Christ stands by to bring you off with honour. Sure you need not doubt of help, who have Christ your Captain for your second. If Satan be a roaring lion, Christ is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. If Satan be an accuser, Christ is an advocate. He lived and died for you, and rather than you miscarry, he will live and die with you. For mercy and tenderness to his soldiers, none like him; he knows what it is to be exposed to the rage of a cruel fiend, and therefore he will succour those that are tempted, Heb. iv. 15. Christ's heart is tendered by his own experience, ever since he grappled with Satan; he is full of bowels to all them that are infested by him; yea, Christ is so dear over them, that then especially he intercedes his Father, when he observes his people in temptations, q.d. O Father, I pray that this poor man or woman may not fall in time of temptation; thus he prayed for Peter, Luke xxii. 32. when he was on earth, I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and thus he prays for you in heaven. No sooner he sees Satan run in upon you, but he runs into the presence of God the Father, and spreadeth his blood and his sanctification for your help. Oh the loves of the Lord Jesus Christ!

3. The Spirit of God will strengthen you against the powers of the evil spirit. This is that Spirit of wisdom and understanding, that Spirit of counsel and might, that
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Spirit that helpeth our infirmities, Isa. xi. 2. Rom. viii. 26. that kindleth and healeth your hearts with love, and zeal, and other graces; that comforts your consciences, and consumes your corruptions, and continues in you, sealing, you to the day of redemption; even he it is that strengthens you against the power of the devil. But how doth the Spirit strengthen? I answer,

1. He teacheth you in and by your temptations. Luther could say, that three things made a good divine, meditation, prayer, and temptation. And indeed, when and where doth the holy Spirit reveal himself more fully unto his people than in the times of their temptations? It is said that at Mazzah and Meribah, the waters of strife and of temptation, there the Lord gave Israel all his statutes.

2. He bearth up and upholds your hearts with graces. My grace is sufficient for thee, said the Lord to Paul. The Spirit of the Lord in your combats usually comes in with assisting grace; or if that be not enough, he comes in also with accepting grace. Tho' thy prayer be weak, and thy faith low, yet faith the Spirit. It is the time of temptation with my poor servant, and therefore I will take the duty tho' it be never so little.

3. The good angels wait upon you as a guard. Have they not a charge from God to see to your safety? And is not one angel stronger than all the devils? If a man were to pass by ship over a dangerous sea, full of rocks, pirates, robbers, would not letters of safe conduct be his comfort? but if a great navy should be sent to conduct him over, if the admiral should call out all his men of war to see him safely arrived, how much more comfortable would this be? Even thus God deals with us; he sends his angels, who willingly afford their ministry, because of their love to man: But in respect of God's word and charge, they are much more willing. O the strong motives that we have to fight! God, and Christ, and his spirits, and angels, all take our part. What greater dignities? What better defence? What greater solace? What better safety than this? to be attended and guarded, not by men (which we account an honour and happiness) but by angels, who pitch their tents about the saints? Psal. xxxi. 8. Methinks the
Knowledge, assurance, remembrance and meditation of this, should marvelously comfort and encourage the people of God.

4. The spirits of the just made perfect with God, contribute their assistance: Do they not pray for the church in general? Do they not mind the condition of those who are yet militant upon earth? Do they not stand upon the walls of heaven, and call upon you to march up the hill after them; crying aloud, Fall on, and the city will be yours, as now it is ours? The same words that Paul spake, living, he even speaks now dead, 'Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit yourselves like men,' 1 Cor. xvi. 13. The printed books, the lively examples of dead saints, call on you still to be valbrons; do they not really speak in Job's language, 'Be of good courage for your souls, and for the glory of your God,' 2 Sam. x. 12.

5. Other saints on earth are in the same posture, with yourselves; they are wrestling, they are all enduring a great fight of afflictions and temptations. Certainly you, march in the midst of gallant spirits; Your fellow-soldiers, are every one the son of a prince, yea, of the King of kings, and Lord of lords; and this is their way to encourage you, and to be encouraged by you: There is not a watch you make, nor a stroke you strike, but it pleaseth them, and refresheth them; as on the other side, there is not a negligence, or a fail, but it wounds them, and afflicts them.

6. The devil himself is not altogether so terrible as he seems. Do you look on him in these particulars.

1. He is but a creature, though he be filled of principal, ity and power, yet his power is but a created power; he, is potent, but not omnipotent; he is the strong armed, man, but Jesus Christ is stronger than he; and tho' you, cannot, yet the Lord Jesus can easily disarm him, and take that away wherein he trusteth, Luke xi. 22.

2. He is a creature under a curse; this may take off, much of that dreadfulness which many look upon him, with, 'Cursed shalt thou be above all the beasts of the field,' Gen. iii. 14. O the encouragement that all our enemies (both that old serpent, and the old serpent called, the devil) are under the divine curse. Surely God's curse, is a weakening thing.

3. He
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3. He is a wounded creature. 1. Wounded by Christ, 'Me shall break thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel;' Gen. iii. 15. The Lord Jesus breaks Satan's head, as he is our Head; he hath wounded him for us, and for our sakes. Here is comfort; alas! Satan was too strong for us hand to hand, and therefore our Lord first enters the list, and gives him a wound; and then, as Joshua, he bids us come, and stand on his neck. Thus when we read of Christ's glorious acts, that he overcame Satan, Mat. iv. 11. Led captivity captive, Eph. iv. 9. Snatched principalities and powers, Col. ii. 15. Made his enemies his footstool, Mat. xxii. 44. Overcame thosethat war against him, Rev. xvii. 14, we are to understand, that all these acts were for our benefit, and that for us he combated with and conquered all thesoes. 2. He is wounded by the members of Christ, *Satan is fallen from heaven like lightning, and made sub* "ject to the feet;" Luke x. 18; 19, 20. His weapons have been often bettered and blunted, not only by Christ, but also by Christians. 'I write unto you, young men; *because you have overcome the wicked one,' 1 John ii. 13, 14. Others have been, and if we will but wrestle, 'We also shall be more than conquerors thro' Christ that loved us,' Rom. viii. 37.

4. For he is a chained creature. *The angel that came down from heaven had a great chain in his hand, and he laid hold on the dragon; that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan; and bound him a thousand years;' Rev. xx. 1, 2. In this chain he is so confined, that he cannot stir until God shall scatter his chain: Nor need we tremble ourselves, because it is said only for a thousand years; for indeed God hath ever kept him in fetters: since his fall, either less or more, and he shall never shake them off again until doomsday: 'He hath ever delivered him into chains of darkness, to be referred unto the judgment of the great day,' 2 Pet. ii. 4. Jude 6. Oh what encouragement is this! I think of it, Christians; devils can do nothing without an commission from God. Though they ruined Job's state, yet they had their power from God; and tho' they invested his body with sad diseases, yet they were fain to ask new leave from God; they could not so much as enter...
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into swine: but Christ must give them authority, and bid them go, Luke viii. 32. How should that animate us, that our greatest enemy is subject to the power of our best and dearest friend? Enough for motives.

SECT. VI.

Use of Direction.

Is our spiritual combat a wrestling? Then some directions how we are to manage this spiritual combat. This is that special use which I ever aim at in all practical points. Many are convinced of such and such a duty, that know but little how to go about it: Others may indeed abound in their own sense, and they may in their own experience find out some rules most proper for their own disposition, and most powerful for their own reformation; and for my part, I shall gladly leave them to themselves; yet for such who are not better furnished, and yet desire some help how to manage wisely this great duty of wrestling with devils, I shall prescribe for their use, and mine own (as the Lord shall enable) these following directions.

In our spiritual combat, two things are necessary to be known, 1. Satan’s assaults. 2. Our repulsals.

His assaults I shall trace according to the several periods of our life, wherein more especially he combats with us in such and such a kind: As in our infancy he combats thus; and in our youth, or time of conversion he combats thus; and in our riper years he combats thus; and in the end or period of life he combats thus. Now herein lies our duty.

1. To be acquainted with his several methods at such times.

2. To repel him in such a manner, and by such means, as are most suitable to his methods: And, O that the Lord would help, and strengthen me in this work! O that he would present his light and truth, that I may discover to you these works of darkness, both for the avoiding and conquering of him, who is reserved for everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day, Jude 6.
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BOOK II.

CHAP. I. SECT. I.

Of the Time when Devils begin their first Assaults.

The first period wherein Satan first begins to assault the elect, it is from their quickening in the womb, and during their infancy, till they become adult. Come then, and first learn we his methods; and, 2dly. Practice we those duties that concern us in our wrestling with him in these respects.

1. For Satan's first assaults, certain it is, that then he begins, when we begin first to live, and move, and have our being. Are we not by nature in Satan's power? Is not the devil then said to rule in us, when the soul and body do first meet, and are both defiled by sin? As it is said of the dragon, that he stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, to devour her child as soon as it was born, Rev. xii. 4. So may we say of every child as soon as it is quickened in the womb, that the great red dragon, the devil, stands ready to devour it. And upon this supposition, even in Auguine's time, there were exorcisms used at the baptism of infants; by which they signified that the child was under the power and dominion of Satan. We use not this ceremony now though it be very antient; we desire rather to content ourselves with the simplicity of the gospel in all the institutions and ordinances of Jesus Christ; but this discovers the antient truths of Satan's assaults and kingdom over children by nature, even in the womb. Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me, saith David, Psal. lii. v. 1. I was shapen in iniquity; in the very forming of the parts of his body, and disposing it for animation there was sin, tho' not implicitly and formally; yet initially, incipiently and imperfectly, because the body was in tendency to make up man. 2. And in sin did my mother conceive me. It is in the Hebrew, my mother did warm me, or nourish me: Which relates not so much to the actual conception, as to the time that his mother did bear, and warm.
the womb. The inference from the text is this, that so soon as that mass of the body is enlivened, and animated, so soon is original sin in man; and when original sin, like a leprosy, spreads itself over the whole man, the devil also doth seize upon him as his own: So that as a man is said to dwell in his own house, it is his home, he may do there what he will, such a right and claim hath the devil to a man by nature; he dwells in him, and reigns in him, and leads him captive at his will.

But if thus it be with us, whilst we are in the womb, is it not otherwise in our birth, and in our infancy, till we become adult? I answer,

1. So long as we are in nature it is all one; no sooner are we born, but we are atheists, idolaters, blasphemers, Sabbath-breakers, murderers, adulterers, thieves; false witnesses, covetous; not by actual transgression, but by an habitual disposition: As we are said to be men, because we have in us the image of men, and seeds of humanity, though we never did any manly action, seeing nothing is wanting but growth and maturity; so by as good right we are called sinners of all kinds, because we have the nature and very image of sin, and the seeds of all corruption living in us in our very infancy; which if we grow, will grow with us, and without preventing grace will come to full ripeness, if we ever attain unto perfect age. In this respect how should Satan but dwell in us, move in us, reign in us; and at our very birth, and during our infancy, do with us, and domineer it in us, even as he pleaseth?

2. So long as we are in infancy, and not adult, (supposing that we may live to the age when we may enjoy use of means, appointed by God for regeneration, sanctification) it is very probable that we are in a state of nature, and vassals of Satan, as we were in the womb. Mr. Ford, a late divine, thus delivers himself; "I know no reason to conclude that God should break his own ordinary road of bestowing grace in infant-age, upon those that live to the use of means appointed to that end, and suppose, (excepting the case of John the Baptist, who yet may be looked upon as privileged by extraordinary account to the womb)"
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Witches to Christ, as his fore-runner in the womb, as well as in the wilderness, it can hardly be asserted de facto, concerning any one that ever lived to the perfect use of reason, that he was justified and sanctified from the womb, or any period of infancy whatsoever; nor have we any scripture warrant to expect it. Nay, it were against the very end for which God appoints the use of means, seeing by bowing saving grace out of them, to those that live to enjoy them; God would in a sort make void his own institutions: For what need of them, when the ends of them may be otherwise attained? I confess, grace is wrought in some very early, possibly in childhood, but ordinarily 'tis after they come under catechizing. His opinion is that the infant of Jeremy being sanctified from the womb, it is not only a setting him apart for his office, 1 Cor. 7:1. And if this be so, then Satan keeps his hold for this first period, i.e., from our first quickening in the womb, and during our infancy till we become adult.

Sect. II.

Of the Manner of the Devil's assaulting at that Time.

But how do the devils assault, or tyrannize it in us at such a time? I answer, They do it quietly, and without resistance. The strong armed man, Satan, quietly keeps the babe, and the things that he possesses are in peace, Luke xi. 21. Poor creatures in this case are as prisoners, content to be tied in the fetters of sin: and therefore to what purpose should Satan rage it in their consciences? I know Satan is jubilant, and more exactly watcheth them that are sprung of godly parents: He observes from time to time how they bewail the sin of their babes, and how they press God with a covenant of grace, and how they dedicate their children to the Lord, and how they present them to God in that ordinance of baptism: And therefore for all this he holds his claim, and leads them as captives at his will, yet I verily believe, upon these observations, he looks very enviously and maliciously upon such children; and if it were not that God hedgeth them about with a wall of holy and blest angels, he would do his utmost to cut off their lives in their polluted state of nature; and immediately hurry them to hell, unto the judgment of the
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great day. However he matters not much, while he keeps his possession; he knows well enough till they are actually regenerated. He is their Lord; he needs not plant any of his strongest batteries, main temptations against them yet; and therefore in that respect, as a keeper of such prisoners, he may sleep securely; he commands with ease; he keeps the house quiet; and all are obedient to his will.

S E C T. III.

Of the State of Infants dying at that time, either in the womb, or in their infancy.

If this be so, then well may we say of our infants dying at this time; ‘Oh, that they had never been conceived! Oh, that they never had come out of the womb into the world!’ not so neither; for among infants some are elect, and some are not; and some are within a covenant of grace, and some are not.

1. Some infants are elect. “For the children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said, the elder should serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.” When Jacob was but an infant in the womb, he was elect; and if Jacob had died in the cradle, he had been saved. Hence believing parents may comfort their souls concerning those children that early die, in that they may be elected, and by consequence eternally saved.

2. Some infants are within a covenant of grace, and this speaks more encouragement. Indeed we cannot look into the book of life which is in heaven, and thereby know that the name of our dying infants are written there; yet we may look into the covenant of grace, and satisfy ourselves as in the effect of their election: are not the children of believing parents the reputed members of Jesus Christ? is not the same promise made to the children that is made to the parents, for receiving both as members? ‘I am thy God, and the God of thy seed,’ said the Lord to Abraham, Gen. xvii. 7. ‘And the promise is to you and to your children, and to all that are afar off,’ said Peter to the Jews. God is in covenant with our infants as soon as
they are living in the womb, and God is sacramentally and
solemnly engaged to our infants in baptism, as soon as
they are born in the world: nor doth it hinder, that
such infants were shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin;
for that is first which is natural, and then that which is
spiritual. The devil first reigns in them as his subjects,
and then the Lord passing by, and seeing them in their
blood; his faith to them in their blood, live; yea, he
faith to them in their blood, live; that time is a time of
love, and therefore, the Lord spreads his skirts over them,
and covers their nakedness, and swears to them (in bap-
tism) and enters into a covenant with them, and so they
become his, Ezek. xvi. 6 7, 8.

But when is it that infants dying in the womb, or in
their infancy, are entered into this covenant of grace? I
answer,

1. Externally, the infants of church-members are in
covenant so soon as they are quick in the womb.

2. Internally, they are in covenant so soon as by the in-
tervention of the Spirit they are wrought on savingly and
effectually. Now this may be either in the womb; and to
godly parents may comfortably hope of all their infants as
die in the womb, before they see this world’s light; or af-
fter birth at any time before they become adult: only as we
will not limit the Spirit, so we cannot but probably think,
that the time of the Spirit’s regenerating is ordinarily in
this case, the very time of their baptism. Mr. Ford in his
Infant-baptism speaks thus: ‘Although God be not bound
in his ordinance of baptism, so as to give grace to all elect
children at the instant of their baptism, yet seeing sacram-
ents are not only bare signs and seals of the covenant,
but conduits of the grace of the covenant, when and in
what manner God is pleased to dispense it; I know not
why the sacrament of baptism to some elect children, I
mean to those that die in infancy, may not be indeed the
laver of regeneration, and they receive the grace of baptiz-
with the sign. For no person can enter into the ki
of heaven, except his person be justified, and his
sanctified, and God useth to dispense these graces
ordinance or others; and seeing such infants live;
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capable of any other ordinance, why should I not believe them regenerate in baptism? If this opinion may be thought of any favour to the Papacy, that holds the sacrament to be effectual, ex opere operato: He answers solidly, that this opinion stands at a great distance from theirs; for that by their doctrine they make no difference between good and bad, elect or non-elect, in the participation of those benefits: They hold that in baptism all infants that receive it are actually regenerate, whereas he restrains the efficacy of that ordinance, only to the elect; and he admits not all of them neither, for he excludes those of the elect that afterwards live to come under the means of regeneration; only he improbably supposes a possibility and probability, that in some elect infants (viz. those that die in infancy) the reason of God's doing that, which all Christians acknowledge, is done at one time or other before the separation of soul and body; (i.e. their renovation, justification and sanctification) is rather the time of baptism, than any other time.

If any demand, how can infants in the womb, or in their infancy, be justified and sanctified? Is not justification bestowed on believing? and is not sanctification conveyed to us in the attendance upon the outward and ordinary means? The answer is, that God justifies them upon another account, and sanctifies them in another way, than those that are of age; And for this my author cites another saying. As in the bodily life, one organ is the instrument of nourishment to the child in the womb, another when born; so in the conveyance of spiritual life, it's one way to a child, another to one of years. For this is not the most universal proposition of the gospel, (he that believeth shall be saved) but this, (he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life;) Now God gives his Son by the Spirit, and we receive him by faith; but God can supply the want of that hand in a child, by dropping into his mouth what he cannot receive with his hand, as I may say.

All this I have said of infants dying in the womb or in their infancy, but as for such, whose life God prolongs till they come to years of age and discretion, I have already delivered my mind, in the former sections.