


Triennial Torah Study – 3rd Year 12/05/2012 _ _ _ _ .

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Num 1	Ezek 40-42	1 John 3-4
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Numbers 1

Introduction to Numbers; A Census in the Wilderness (Numbers 1-2)

Numbers doesn't sound like an interesting name for a book of the Bible. But don't let that fool you. The name of the book, translated from its title in the Greek Septuagint, comes from the first counting or numbering of Israel, which takes place 13 months after the Exodus from Egypt. "Take a census of all the congregation of all the children of Israel" (verse 2). Yet Numbers is not filled with endless genealogies, as one might expect. Quite the contrary, it contains a great deal of interesting information on the people of Israel as God leads them out into the "wilderness," i.e., a wild, uninhabited land. Indeed, the Hebrew name for the book is Bemidbar, taken from the first words in the book, translated into English as "In the Wilderness."

Herein they are taught principles, lessons and even doctrine. Moreover, the book of Numbers reports on many of God's miraculous acts that are mentioned nowhere else. Furthermore, it is filled with many parallels, pictures or symbolic representations of Jesus Christ. The priesthood and tabernacle service anticipates His ministry.

The focus is on the wilderness because previous revelations of the Lord had been given to Moses on Mount Sinai. The Book of Numbers covers the remaining 39 years of the 40-year history of the Israelites in the wilderness. Only 11 of the tribes of Israel were numbered—a total of 603,550 men who were able to go to war. The numbering, or census, was conducted by tribal leaders, each head of the house of his father's tribe. Because of their tabernacle duties, the Levites were not included in this numbering for battle (verse 47). The Levites were instructed to make camp near and around the tabernacle, and all others were to keep their distance on pain of death.

Ezekiel's Detailed Vision of the Future (Ezekiel 40)

Fourteen years have passed since Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed (verse 1). But beginning with chapter 40, Ezekiel relates a vision of a future temple, city and nation, which must have given hope to those in captivity. Indeed, with the Jerusalem temple in ashes, Ezekiel does not only say there will be a new one.

He gives extraordinary details of a coming temple complex and a new arrangement of the Holy Land that was quite different than what they knew from the past. This no doubt gave those who heard it great confidence in the truth of it—for how could Ezekiel have come up with all this on his own?

Some have argued for a historical fulfillment of this passage, either through the reconstructed temple by Zerubbabel after the ancient Jewish return from Babylonian captivity or through Herod's later expansion on this second temple. Others see the prophecy as an allegorical representation of God's spiritual temple, His Church. And there are other ideas. The Expositor's Bible Commentary has this to say on the matter:

"These chapters have been interpreted as referring to Solomon's temple, the temple of Zerubbabel (either real or proposed), Herod's temple, or a future temple in the Millennium or in the eternal state. Some, having difficulty understanding the passage when taken literally, interpret the section allegorically as teaching about the church and its earthly blessings and glories, while others understand the passage to symbolize the reality of the heavenly temple where Christ ministers today.

"The historical fulfillments do not fit the details of the passage. The temples of Solomon, Zerubbabel, or Herod do not share the design and dimensions of the temple described in Ezekiel 40-42. The worship procedure set forth in chapters 43-46, though Mosaic in nature, has not been followed in history in exactly the manner described in these chapters. The river that flows forth from the temple in 47:1-12 has never flowed from any of the three historical temples mentioned above. The only comparisons to this river are seen in Genesis 2:8-14 and Revelation 22:1-2 (cf. Isa 35:6-7; Joel 3:18; Zech 14:8). The geographical dimensions and tribal allotments of the land are certainly not feasible today, nor have they ever been followed in times past. Geographical changes will be necessary prior to the fulfillment of chapters 45, 47-48 [of Ezekiel]. Therefore one would not look to historical (past or present) fulfillments of these chapters but to the future.

"The figurative or 'spiritualizing' interpretative approach does not seem to solve any of the problems of Ezekiel 40-48; it tends to create new ones. When the interpreter abandons a normal [literal interpretation] because the passage does not seem to make sense taken that way and opts for an interpretative procedure by which he can allegorize, symbolize, or 'spiritualize,' the interpretations become subjective. Different aspects of a passage mean whatever the interpreter desires. There are no governing interpretative principles [in that case] except the interpreter's mind (though there is appeal to the...[New Testament's revelation of spiritual meaning behind many facets of the Old Testament]). Even apocalyptic visions such as

found in these chapters [at the end of Ezekiel] require a normal [literal method of interpretation]. To interpret these chapters in any manner other than a normal, literal approach would appear to contradict the interpretative guide in the vision who warns Ezekiel that he is to write down all the minute details concerning the plan for the temple and its regulations so that these details might be considered carefully and followed in every aspect (40:4; 43:10-11; 44:5; cf. Exod 25:9; 1 Chronicles 28:19). Therefore a figurative approach does not adequately treat the issues of Ezekiel 40-48.

“In order to determine the general time-frame of these chapters, they will be examined in light of the development and flow of Ezekiel’s argument in the entire book. He has shown the presence of God’s glory in the historical Jerusalem temple and its departure from that temple because of Israel’s sin of breaking the Mosaic covenant. The Fall of Jerusalem and the Captivity in Babylon were the consequence (chs. 4-24). After declaring how the nations would also be judged (25:1-33:20), Ezekiel encouraged the Jewish captives through six...messages of hope (33:21-39:29). In these he informed them that the Messiah would restore them to their Promised Land in the future and become a true shepherd to them. They would be cleansed and all their covenants would be fulfilled. Even in the end times, after the land prospers and Israel dwells securely in it, some will try to take the Promised Land away from Israel and profane the Lord’s name; but the Lord will not permit it (chs. 38-39). It would seem logical, therefore, that Ezekiel would conclude the logical and chronological development of his prophecy by describing the messianic kingdom and the return of God’s glory to govern his people (chs. 40-48) rather than suddenly reverting back to some historical period, whether immediately following the Captivity or during Herod’s temple, or to describe an idealistic temple.

“Ezekiel appears to have been contrasting the past and contemporary desecration of the temple and its regulations with the future holiness and righteousness of the temple and its functions. Ezekiel also used this format in chapters 33-39. The correct fixture procedure would bring shame and conviction on Ezekiel’s contemporaries (43:6-12; 44:5-16; 45:9-12). This would again point to a future fulfillment of these chapters.

“God’s glory is a most important feature of Ezekiel’s prophecy. The return of God’s glory to the new temple in 43:1-12 is the climax of the book. The context implies that this could only occur after Israel has been restored to her Promised Land and cleansed. The stress is on holiness. Holiness had not characterized Israel as a people heretofore; and, according to Ezekiel 36, Israel would not be a holy people in accord with God’s standard till after they had been restored to the Promised Land and cleansed in the Messianic Age. When God’s glory returns, it will remain in Israel’s midst forever (43:6-7). The development of this unifying factor in Ezekiel’s prophecy would argue strongly for a future fulfillment of chapters 40-48.

“Finally, the entire context and argument of the Scriptures concerning God’s outworking of his redemptive plan in history would seem to place these chapters and the aspects mentioned above in the time of the consummation of all history. This is perhaps best seen in the river of life that flows from the temple to bring healing to the land (47:1-12). This concept is first seen in

Genesis 2:8-14 in the Garden of Eden, the perfect environment of God's holiness. With sin, this garden and its river were removed. When God concludes his redemptive program and brings full salvation to mankind with eternal life through the passion of Jesus Christ his Son, it is most appropriate that the river of eternal life would again flow to demonstrate full healing on the earth. This conclusion to the full circle of God's redemptive program is also shown in Revelation 22:1-6 in God's description of the eternal state. Such is also conveyed by other O[ld] T[estament] prophets (cf. Isa 35:5-6; Joel 3:18; Zech 14:8).

"Therefore, the context and argument of the Book of Ezekiel as well as the development of God's redemptive program argue strongly for a future fulfillment of the events of Ezekiel 40-48 in the end times" (introductory notes on chapters 40-48).

Expositor's next takes up the issue of whether the vision is of the 1,000-year reign of Christ (the Millennium) or the eternal state beyond it. As it explains, the obvious differences between the descriptions in Ezekiel and those of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21-22 make it clear that Ezekiel's vision is of Jerusalem and the Promised Land during the Millennium.

Many have great difficulty with the concept of a sacrificial system being reinstated in the future. The book of Hebrews explains regarding the Old Testament system that "in those sacrifices there is [only] a reminder of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins" (10:4). Rather, Jesus Christ has "once...appeared to put away sins by the sacrifice of Himself" and "we have been sacrificed through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (9:26; 10:10). Israel's ritual system, we are told, "was symbolic for the present time...imposed until the time of reformation" (9:9)—meaning the Church age. This is why many try to interpret these chapters at the end of Ezekiel allegorically.

Expositor's notes: "The writer of Hebrews goes on to say that where sins have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin. Understood in the context of Hebrews described above, there is no longer the need for the picture lessons and reminders now that the reality of Christ's efficacious blood sacrifice has been offered once and for all. No other efficacious sacrifice could be offered because only Christ's sacrifice of himself is efficacious. However, the writer of Hebrews does not declare that pictorial sacrifices and festivals absolutely can no longer be observed as reminders and picture lessons of what Christ did after his singularly efficacious sacrifice has been completed. Since the sacrifices and festivals in the O[ld] T[estament] system were only pictures, they could never conflict with the sacrifice of the Messiah. They never were and never could be efficacious. Likewise, the sacrifices in the millennial system described by Ezekiel are only picture lessons and reminders of the sin of man and of the only efficacious sacrifice for sin once and for all made by Christ. The millennial sacrifices will be both reminders to believers in millennial worship and picture lessons to unbelievers born in the Millennium. (These 'unbelievers' could be born from the Jews who enter the Millennium from the tribulation period.) On the basis of the O[ld] T[estament] role of the sacrifices and the argument of the writer of Hebrews, it does not appear that the pictorial sacrifices of the Mosaic system nor the memorial sacrifices of the millennial worship conflict with the finished and complete work of Jesus' sacrifice for all sins once and for all on the cross. Consequently, the sacrifices in the

millennial sacrificial system of Ezekiel appear to be only memorials of Christ's finished work and pictorial reminders that mankind by nature is sinful and in need of redemption from sin. Not only is this view substantiated by comparison with the Mosaic covenant in which the sacrifices were picture lessons and types, but it is also confirmed by the writer of Hebrews as observed above" (emphasis added).

Today, Christians can and should gain a great deal of insight into the reconciling and saving work of Jesus Christ through studying the Old Testament tabernacle and temple and its sacrificial system. Yet that insight is certainly limited by having to construct in mental pictures, based on complex and detailed passages, what it was like. Just imagine the establishment of a living, functioning model at the world's capital. What a wonderful teaching tool this will provide for the Israelites living in the Promised Land and, as there will likely still be mass communications at that time, for all mankind.

The Millennial Temple Complex (Ezekiel 40)

Ezekiel's vision was received on the tenth day of the first month. "If it is correct to designate the month as Nisan [the first month on the religious calendar], then this apocalyptic vision would have been received on the tenth day of Nisan, the very day the people may have begun to prepare for the Passover four days later. Whether they actually observed the Passover or not in exile, surely they would be contemplating Israel's redemption out of Egypt and the creation of their nation. This vision, then, would be an encouragement that the Lord would complete his purposes for the nation in the messianic kingdom" (Expositor's Bible Commentary, note on verse 1-4).

We then get into the specifics of what Ezekiel saw. The details often make the reading of this section tedious and incomprehensible. Also, there is a great deal of dispute about what all of the measurements are, and what they refer to. Nevertheless, with the information provided here and historical details we have of the past Jerusalem temples, we can get a good idea of what the magnificent temple to be built at the return of Jesus Christ will probably look like. Ezekiel is first taken to a "very high mountain" (verse 2), perhaps signifying the nation of Israel in a figurative sense, as it will be the chief nation of the Millennium. It could also represent the Kingdom of God, the ultimate peak of which will be the heavenly "mount of the congregation in the farthest sides of the north" (Isaiah 14:13)—for despite the fact that Jesus Christ will rule from the earthly Jerusalem over all nations, heaven will, during the Millennium, remain the seat of God the Father and thus the pinnacle of the Kingdom. In any case, the prophet is able to see on the southern part of this mountain what appears to him to be something like a city. Indeed, when we reconstruct the temple complex according to the measurements given, this is just what it looks like. Ezekiel was probably familiar with the city of Babylon with its thick walls and gates, and he probably found some similarity. Yet as a future city, we could perhaps expect some things Ezekiel saw to be more like one of our modern cities than what he himself was accustomed to.

The complex of buildings occupies a square, 500 cubits on each side, covering about 25 acres. Carefully arranged within the complex are variously sized open courtyards surrounded by buildings, many of which are several stories tall. A number of “towers” can be seen (see Psalm 48:13). One structure in the middle of the complex apparently reaches to the height of a modern 25-story building. And surrounding the square of buildings there is a large open parkland that is enclosed by a wall, defining the outer perimeter of the grounds of this “city.” There is some confusion as to exactly where the millennial temple complex will be located. The question centers on the meaning of Zion or Mount Zion in other passages. The Bible elsewhere makes it clear that Jesus Christ will reign from Zion (Psalm 132:13-14; Isaiah 2:3; 8:18; 18:7; Micah 4:2, 7). Zion was the area of David’s Jerusalem. The Temple Mount, a higher hill just north of the City of David where Solomon’s and the later temple complexes sat, is Mount Moriah (2 Chronicles 3:1). When Solomon’s temple was built, the Ark of the Covenant was brought up to the Temple Mount from “the city of David, which is Zion” (1 Kings 8:1). This has led some to conclude that Zion is restricted to the area of David’s city. If that is the case, then the millennial temple will be located here, south of the present Temple Mount. This southern area, however, is a rather narrow hilltop with higher hills surrounding it, so the topography of the area would have to be drastically altered. This could well be as Zion is to be exalted and built up (see Isaiah 2:2; 40:9; Micah 4:1; Psalm 102:16). Indeed, the whole area around Jerusalem is going to become a plain (Zechariah 14:10). Why might the temple be moved? Perhaps to symbolize that God’s throne is no longer high above Jerusalem in a heavenly place but has rather come down to the earthly capital—where sits the throne of David that Jesus will assume.

But that’s only if the temple really is to be moved. It could well be that Zion applies to all of Jerusalem. Indeed, the name Jerusalem originally applied to the City of David. The Temple Mount was then incorporated into Jerusalem. If Zion was simply synonymous with Jerusalem, then the Temple Mount would have been part of Zion. The city later came to encompass a larger area to the west, which all became part of Jerusalem—and perhaps of Zion. Today, the hill to the west of David’s city is referred to as Zion. Yet it seems quite possible that the biblical designation of Zion applies to the entire city of Jerusalem. Indeed, in Isaiah 2:3, the two seem to mean exactly the same place. Ezekiel’s temple complex could easily fit on the current Temple Mount—yet even in that case, major topographical changes will still be made to the area.

After seeing an overview of the complex, Ezekiel is brought down to it, where he meets his tour guide standing at a gate. This “man” is holding a measuring rod and a line of flax (apparently a measuring tape of unspecified length, used for especially long measurements).

He tells Ezekiel to record what he sees for the benefit of the house of Israel, and ultimately for our instruction (Ezekiel 40:3-4).

The length of the measuring rod is given as six cubits. There is some dispute about the size of a cubit. Many consider a cubit to have been 18 inches. Others claim a standard cubit was

about 21 inches, or some other length. Since the cubit being used here is defined as one handbreadth longer than the standard cubit of the day (verse 5), we could expect something longer than the standard by about 4 inches. (Four inches is the current measure of a “hand,” as used in measuring horses). Without going into all of the supporting evidence, there is some indication that the Hebrew cubit was based on “handbreadths” or palms, and that a palm was 3.6 inches. This would make an 18-inch cubit equal to five palms, and a 21.6-inch cubit six palms (perhaps this was the “cubit of a man” after the number of man—see Deuteronomy 3:11 KJV; Revelation 13:18). We are proceeding on the assumption of a seven-palm, 25.2-inch cubit, as described in the Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th edition, article “Weights and

Measures.” Some may insist this is too long, but the relative proportions of the buildings remain the same regardless of which cubit size is used. And with the seven-palm cubit, rooms that appear to be bed-chambers turn out to have the square footage of modern college dormitory rooms; rooms used for private dining are just over 12 feet square; the tables used for holding the instruments for sacrifice come to a reasonable work table height and the tables for the showbread (Exodus 25:23) would have been as a normal countertop or buffet table in height.

Using a much smaller cubit would yield some uncomfortably small rooms and furnishings. With the seven-palm, 25.2-inch cubit, the measuring rod used by Ezekiel’s guide is 12.6 feet long. The tour begins with the measuring of an outer wall, which is one rod high, and one rod thick (Ezekiel 40:5). It is often assumed that this first wall Ezekiel encounters surrounds the “outer court” of the temple (verse 17). There are problems with this, however, as this wall is described as being “all around the outside of the temple,” and yet there are a number of other structures that clearly occupy some of the space that this wall would have to occupy if it were there. While it could perhaps be an outer building wall in places, discrepancies in building height and other features make even this resolution awkward. And in verse 6, it says they went to the east gate and went up the stairs (giving the impression of approaching it) after measuring this wall. This seems to imply that the six-cubit wall was behind them, outside of the gate they were approaching. And indeed, as described in chapter 42, there is a freestanding wall much further out to enclose an open parkland around the temple complex. Perhaps it was in one of the gates of this outer park wall that the man with the measuring instruments was standing to greet Ezekiel and show him through this “city” of the future.

In any case, they enter the eastern gate of the building complex after climbing some steps. The actual number of steps for the eastern gate is not given, but the northern and southern gates each have seven steps (40:22, 26). The eastern gate may have the same number, or there may be more, considering that the eastern side of the temple complex may sit above a steeper slope than the other sides. There is a valley, the Kidron Valley, running just below the east side of both the current Temple Mount and the City of David. So there could well be a need for additional steps.

Next we are given the dimensions of the gates. Each gateway comprises a narrow, 50-cubitlong (105-foot) passageway through a large building complex. In the middle of the gateway is a small open-air courtyard (25 cubits wide, verse 13, and at least as long) with three

six-cubit (12.6-foot) square rooms on either side. These rooms may at times be used as dining rooms for leaders (as alluded to in Ezekiel 44:3). And they may also be used by the priests as counseling rooms for judging private disputes (see Deuteronomy 16:18; 17:8-9; Ezekiel 44:24).

The thresholds at the outer entrance of the gateway corridor are fairly narrow (only 12.6 feet wide), symbolically picturing the constricted nature of the gate into the Kingdom of God (Matthew 7:14). The entrance gates will be attended by gatekeepers (as in former days, 1 Chronicles 9:22-24; 2 Chronicles 23:19; Ezekiel 44:11), who will have the responsibility of restricting entrance into the main courtyards of the temple to those who fit the scriptural requirements of being clean, both spiritually and physically—circumcised in mind and body (see 44:9, 23).

Other details about these gates are given, but the exact application of each measurement is not always clear. The accompanying diagram provides the basic outline and one interpretation of Ezekiel's description. Controversy especially surrounds the height of these gates. Ezekiel 40:14 describes "gateposts" that are 60 cubits (126 feet) high—or about 12 stories tall. While some reject the idea that this is a vertical dimension, there is no reason to believe it is not. Most feel it applies at least to the "vestibule" or "porch" (KJV) located on the inner side of the gate (verses 8-9), but whether it is a narrow tower over just the entrance, or whether it stretches across the entire 50-cubit face of the gate is not clear. If it did, it would give the gate some design similarity to the temple itself. Another view applies this measurement to the entire gate complex (to all its vertical support members), in a design that Ezekiel would have recognized as being similar to most ancient city gates.

Many of the "walls" Ezekiel encounters are five or six cubits thick (10.5-12.6 feet), and quite capable of containing small rooms. Since it was common in ancient times for rooms or passageways to be built into and on the city walls (as was the house of Rahab in Jericho, Joshua 2:15), we must not assume that everything Ezekiel refers to as a "wall" was a completely solid structure throughout. While these walls could be primarily for insulation, one could also speculate on what functional use might be made of this space, including perhaps closets, restrooms, utility rooms, and, considering the height of some of these buildings, even elevators and stairwells.

Passing through the eastern gate, Ezekiel and his guide enter the outer court, move on to the northern gate, and then to the southern gate, which are said to all be of the same design. The outer court is 100 cubits wide (210 feet), between the outer and inner gates (Ezekiel 40:19, 23, 27). And, in the area adjacent to the outer gates are 30 chambers, perhaps five chambers on each side of the three gates, each of them located in the center of their respective 500-cubit span. In front of these chambers is a pavement, or walkway, to provide access to them (verses 17-18).

Ezekiel states that these 30 chambers "faced the pavement," which he defined as the "lower pavement." This may mean he was giving only the number of chambers on the ground floor. As we will see, certain other chamber-bearing structures have at least three stories, and there is

reason to believe these outer court buildings are multilevel structures as well. For example, Ezekiel 42:6 describes a three-story building which did not need pillars “like the pillars of the courts” because it was built with a terraced design so that upper floors could have front patios built on the rooftops of the lower floors. This implies that there were pillars in the courts being used as the structural means of supporting multilevel patios or walkway pavements.

The Inner Gates and Court (Ezekiel 40)

From the outer south gate, Ezekiel is brought across the outer court to the inner south gate.

These inner gates are basically mirror images of the outer gates, so that the “vestibules” or “archways” of the outer gates (verses 31, 34, 37, apparently the main entryways of each gate) face the corresponding “archways” of the inner gates. One difference is that there are eight steps leading up to the inner gates, instead of seven (verse 31). After going through, and measuring, the inner south gate, they move on to the east inner gate, and then the north inner gate, all mirror images of the outer gates, and directly across from them.

At the north gate, Ezekiel sees several items directly related to the offering of sacrifices, including tables and utensils, and the entrance to a room for washing the meat for the burnt offering (verses 38-43; Leviticus 1:9, 13). In Solomon’s time the burnt offerings were washed using elaborate open-air lavers (water tanks) situated in the inner courtyard around the temple. Ezekiel describes no such lavers in the millennial temple, nor any lavers for the priests to wash themselves in (as used at the tabernacle, Exodus 30:18-21), nor any cast bronze “sea” (the 21-foot diameter water tank, that Solomon had set up at the southeast corner of the temple for the priests’ washing, see 2 Chronicles 4:2-6, 10). Since Ezekiel describes an indoor facility northeast of the temple for the washing of the burnt offerings, we might expect to find additional space there (and especially in the parallel location southeast of the temple) with washrooms for the priests. And we might also expect that all of these rooms will be fully equipped with modern indoor plumbing.

After touring the north inner court gate, Ezekiel is shown rooms for the priests (now limited to the sons of Zadok, see Ezekiel 40:46; 44:15-31), apparently on the east side of the north and south gates, facing each other. They are described as “chambers for the singers” (40:44-46), so they are likely to be used as rehearsal rooms for priests who will undoubtedly once again be “employed in that work [making music in praise to God and doing other temple and altar work] day and night” in rotating shifts throughout the year (1 Chronicles 9:25-33). These gates and rooms surround a 100-cubit square courtyard located in front of the temple sanctuary. This inner courtyard is in the center of the entire temple complex, with the altar of burnt offering (Ezekiel 40:47) as the focal point in the very middle of everything.

With the last two verses (48-49), Ezekiel completes his counterclockwise tour of the inner court by arriving at the vestibule (porch) of the temple itself, on the west side of the courtyard. Two pillars are briefly mentioned in verse 49, probably identical to the ancient temple pillars described in some detail in 1 Kings 7:15-22 and 2 Chronicles 3:15-17. Comparing the design

of the pillars of the temple of Solomon with extra-biblical records about similar pillars in the court of the second temple, we can surmise that they may have been used as enormous torches—oil lamps on a grand scale. (The Herodian temple had four such courtyard lamps.)

The Temple Sanctuary – Ezekiel 41

The temple sanctuary building itself is not described in detail in Ezekiel. But it is described enough to recognize that the design is very much like that of both the tabernacle and the temple Solomon built. This makes sense when we realize that the designs of these earlier structures were given by God to reflect the pattern of the heavenly temple (see Exodus 25:8-9; 26:30; 1 Chronicles 28:11-12, 19; Hebrews 8:5). To get a full picture of Ezekiel's temple, it is often necessary to refer to details given elsewhere about the first temple, and even the tabernacle.

For example, the height of the vestibule or “porch” (the entrance hall structure) of the future temple is not given in Ezekiel. It is described in 2 Chronicles 3:4 as being 120 cubits (252 feet) in height, making it as tall as a modern 25-story building. The lobby of this entrance hall is described by Ezekiel 40:49 as having inside dimensions of 11 x 20 cubits (23 x 42 feet).

Ezekiel now enters the Holy Place from the vestibule (verses 1-2). There are only two rooms in the temple sanctuary, each 20 cubits (42 feet) in width. The first, called elsewhere the Holy Place, is 20 x 40 cubits (42 x 84 feet). The height is given in 1 Kings 6:2 as 30 cubits (63 feet). In the tabernacle and first temple, it contained the table of showbread, the seven-branched lampstand or menorah and the altar of incense. Only the incense altar is mentioned here (Ezekiel 41:22), but that could be because it is specifically mentioned as being larger. Perhaps the other furnishings, if present, were the same as Ezekiel already knew them to be from the first temple.

The inner room (verses 3-4), called the Most Holy Place or Holy of Holies, is a square 20 x 20 cubits. According to 1 Kings 6:20 its height is also 20 cubits. In the tabernacle and first temple it contained the Ark of the Covenant. Ezekiel does not mention the ark. Jeremiah 3:16-17 says: “Then it shall come to pass...that they will say no more, ‘The ark of the covenant of the Lord.’ It shall not come to mind, nor shall they remember it, nor shall they visit it, nor shall it be made anymore. At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the Lord, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem.” This could mean that there won't be an ark there at all. However, that seems somewhat odd given that there is a heavenly ark that would likely still be typified in the millennial temple (see Revelation 11:19). The point of Jeremiah's statement may simply be that the actual bodily presence of God in the person of the glorified Jesus Christ will so overshadow the ark that this representative object will not even be thought of. People will go to Jerusalem not to visit the mere resting place of the ark, but rather to see where the Almighty King sits enthroned in majesty. What is the ark itself compared to that awesome reality? (Interestingly, the statement that the ark will not be “made anymore” could even indicate that the original ark will be the one brought back and used—

though the word rendered “made” can be variously translated, so the meaning is not entirely clear.)

Further details on the design and decor of the temple can be found in 1 Kings 6 (verses 2-4, 14-32). It can also be noted that most of the dimensions of the temple structure are twice that of the tabernacle (see Exodus 26:15-30). With this initial brief description of the temple sanctuary, Ezekiel moves beyond its 6-cubit-thick (12.6-foot) walls (Ezekiel 41:5), to the 90 side chambers that surround it. Combined with 1 Kings 6:5-6 and verse 10 we learn that each room is four cubits in width and five cubits tall, but five, six or seven cubits in length depending on which of the three stories the rooms were on, with the larger rooms on the top floor. (These chambers bolster the argument for a seven-palm cubit, which would make the smaller rooms 8.4 x 10.5 feet, with 10.5-foot stories. With a five-palm or 18-inch cubit, these rooms would only be 6 x 7.5 feet, with a rather short 7.5 feet between floors.) The step-like construction of these chambers is described, with the explanation that the configuration allows each floor to be supported on the temple side using one-cubit ledges, rather than requiring fasteners penetrating into the temple wall itself (Ezekiel 41:6-7; compare 1 Kings 6:6). No mention is given here as to the purpose for these chambers, but other verses (for example, 1 Chronicles 9:27) describe Levites lodging all around the house of God. These rooms do seem about the size of bedrooms, with the third-floor chambers being large enough for double occupancy.

(This would allow a total of 120 beds.)

We were earlier told that there were steps leading up to the temple (40:49). The number is not given. Ezekiel 41:8 describes a six-cubit elevation around the temple for the side chambers, but when all the various measurements are laid out, it appears that this foundation does not extend underneath the temple itself. There is also a five-cubit-wide terrace along the outside of the side chambers, undoubtedly with a restraining rail of some sort for the safety of those using it (verse 11; see Deuteronomy 22:8). The 20-cubit-wide walkway (verse 10) appears to be the one on the ground level between the temple and the inner court buildings.

In verse 12, Ezekiel is shown one of these buildings—the very large structure on the western side of the inner courtyard. It is 70 x 90 cubits inside (nearly 28,000 square feet). Not much is said about it here, but in 1 Chronicles 26:12-18 a storehouse is mentioned, adjacent to a highway, which could only have been on the western side of the temple complex where there were no outer courts. Several other scriptures mention such a storehouse (see 1 Kings 7:51; Nehemiah 10:38; 12:44; 13:12-13; Malachi 3:10) as a place for keeping tithes, offerings and firstfruits, as well as temple articles of gold and silver. Since most all of the other buildings are multiple stories, it is also quite likely that this building is similarly tall.

We are then given several measurements that are all 100 cubits (Ezekiel 41:13). First, the temple itself from east to west is 100 cubits. Second, from the west outer edge of the temple complex through the storehouse and walkway to the west edge of the temple itself is also 100 (5+70+5+20 cubits). We were previously told of the 100-cubit courtyard in the center, and the two 50-cubit east gates with a 100-cubit outer court between them, making the entire complex

from west to east 500 cubits, as already mentioned. The north-south dimensions were already defined as two 50-cubit gates and a 100-cubit outer courtyard on each side of the 100-cubit inner courtyard at the center. We are now also told that the eastern face of the temple and two 20-cubit walkways are the exact width of the 100-cubit inner court, making the temple itself 60 cubits wide (verse 14). The western storehouse is also confirmed to be 100 cubits wide (90 plus the two five-cubit-wide walls, verse 15).

The remainder of the chapter contains details on the appearance of the temple. These include windows and wall decorations of palm trees and “cherubim,” creatures that in this case had two faces, as opposed to the four faces Ezekiel had seen many years earlier (see Ezekiel 1). There is also a description of the incense altar (41:22), which was a cubit higher and wider than that of the tabernacle (see Exodus 30:2). Finally, we are given descriptions of the bi-fold doors to each of the two rooms of the temple. Further details are given in 1 Kings 6 about windows and wall decorations, although in some cases differences can be noted.

The Inner Court Buildings and Holy Area (Ezekiel 42)

Ezekiel now leaves the immediate temple area and proceeds through the inner north gate to the outer courtyard, and over to a 100 x 50-cubit, three-story building on the west side of the gate (verses 1-3). This building, and the corresponding one next to the inner south gate, are said to be dining chambers where the priests eat the holy offerings (verse 13). They have an interesting terraced construction, where each floor is narrower than the one below it (verses 56). The rooms on the ground floor are said to have a 10-cubit-wide indoor corridor in front of them (verse 4). The upper floors are each set back, to allow for rooftop patios (outdoor corridors) in front of the second- and third-floor rooms. The first- and second-floor rooms are the same size, but the third-floor rooms are smaller (verses 5-6).

At the end of this chapter, Ezekiel is taken through the outer east gate to measure the enclosed temple district. Notice these measurements are using the measuring rod of six cubits. So rather than being the 500 cubits per side of the temple complex, this is a 3,000-cubit-per-side “holy area” (verse 20). The word “cubits” in the NKJV is italicized in verse 20. The KJV translators correctly used “reeds,” as specifically stated in the previous verses. This is describing a walled area 1.2 miles square, probably of carefully landscaped parkland, with the temple complex in the middle of it. This gives a “buffer zone” of almost exactly one-half mile between the outside walls of the temple complex and the walls around its grounds.

If this outer wall is also the one we saw in Ezekiel 40:5, then it is about 12 feet thick and 12 feet high. What purpose might this serve? The parkland surrounding the temple “city” could be more than just open space. It could serve as an area for tents or booths during the pilgrimage feasts, especially the Feast of Tabernacles. If so, this thick wall could house much needed bathroom facilities, or supply other indoor needs for the large numbers of visitors.

John Gills Exposition: <http://www.biblestudytools.com/kjv/1-john/4-21.html>

1 John 3:5

And ye know that he was manifested, this is a truth of the Gospel the saints were well instructed in and acquainted with; that Jesus Christ, the Word and Son of God, who is here meant, who was with the Father, and lay in his bosom from all eternity, was in the fulness of time made manifest in the flesh, or human nature, by assuming it into union with his divine person; in which he came and dwelt among men, and became visible to them: the end of which manifestation was,

to take away our sins;?as the antitype of the scape goat, making reconciliation and satisfaction for them, through the sacrifice of himself; which was doing what the blood of bulls and goats, or any legal sacrifices or moral performances, could never do: and this he did by taking the sins of his people upon himself, by carrying them up to the cross, and there bearing them, with all the punishment due unto them, in his body; by removing them quite away, and utterly destroying them, finishing and making an end of them: and by causing them to pass away from them, from off their consciences, through the application of his blood by his Spirit:

and in him is no sin;?neither original, nor actual; no sin inherent; there was sin imputed to him, but none in him, nor done by him; and hence he became a fit person to be a sacrifice for the sins of others, and by his unblemished sacrifice to take the away; and answered the typical sacrifices under the law, which were to be without spot and blemish: and this shows that he did not offer himself for any sins of his own, for there were none in him, but for the sins of others; and which consideration, therefore, is a strong dissuasive from sinning, and as such is mentioned by the apostle; for, since sin is of such a nature that nothing could atone for it but the blood and sacrifice of Christ, an innocent, as well as a divine person, it should be abhorred by us; and since Christ has taken it away by the sacrifice of himself, it should not be continued and encouraged by us; and since in him is no sin, we ought to imitate him in purity of life and conversation; the end of Christ's bearing our sins was, that we might live unto righteousness, and to purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works; and his love herein should constrain us to obedience to him: so the Jews F12 speak of a man after the image of God, and who is the mystery, of the name Jehovah; and in that man, they say, there is no sin, neither shall death rule over him; and this is that which is said, (Psalms 5:4) ; neither shall evil dwell with thee.

1 John 3:6

Whosoever abideth in him As the branch in the vine, deriving all light, life, grace, holiness, wisdom, strength, joy, peace, and comfort from Christ; or dwells in him by faith, enjoys communion with him as a fruit of union to him; and stands fast in him, being rooted and grounded in him, and abides by him, his truths and ordinances, takes up his rest, and places his security in him, and perseveres through him:

sinneth not; not that he has no sin in him, or lives without sin, but he does not live in sin, nor give up himself to a vicious course of life; for this would be inconsistent with his dwelling in Christ, and enjoying communion with him:

whosoever sinneth; which is not to be understood of a single action, but of a course of sinning: hath not seen him, neither known him; that is, he has never seen Christ with an eye of faith; he has never truly and spiritually seen the glory, beauty, fulness, and suitableness of Christ, his need, and the worth of him; he has never seen him so as to enjoy him, and have communion with him; for what communion hath Christ with Belial, or light with darkness, or righteousness with unrighteousness? (2 Corinthians 6:14 2 Corinthians 6:15) , nor has he ever savingly known him, or been experimentally acquainted with him; for though he may profess to know him in words, he denies him in works.

1 John 3:7

Little children, let no man deceive you, neither by these doctrines, nor by wicked practices, drawing into the belief of the one, or into the performance of the other; suggesting, as the Gnostics did, that knowledge without practice was enough, and that it was no matter how a man lived, provided his notions of the Gospel were right:

he that doeth righteousness, is righteous; not that any man is made righteous by the works of the law, or by his obedience to the law of works, for this is contrary to the express word of God; and besides, the best righteousness of man is imperfect, and can never constitute or denominate him righteous before God; and was he justified by it; it would not only lay a foundation for boasting in him, which ought not to be, but would make the death, the sacrifice, and righteousness of Christ, to be in vain; men are only made righteous by the righteousness of Christ, which he has wrought out which is revealed in the Gospel, and received by faith, and which God imputes without works; so that he that doeth righteousness is he that being convinced of the insufficiency of his own righteousness, and of the excellency and suitableness of Christ's righteousness, renounces his own, and submits to his; who lays hold upon it, receives it, and exercises faith on it, as his justifying righteousness; and, in consequence of this, lives in a course of holiness and righteousness, in opposition to, and distinction from one that commits sin, or lives a sinful course of life; which, though it does not make him righteous in the sight of God, yet it shows him to be righteous in the sight of men, and proves that faith to be right which lays hold on the righteousness of Christ, by which he is truly righteous:

even as he is righteous;?as Christ himself is righteous; and so the Syriac version reads; not as personal, or as he is personally and essentially righteous as God; but as mystical, every member of his body being clothed with the same robe of righteousness the whole body of Christ is, and indeed justified by the same righteousness that he as Mediator was, when he rose from the dead, as the representative of his people: moreover, as Christ showed himself to be righteous as man, by doing good, so believers in him, by imitating him, and walking as he walked, show themselves to be good and righteous, like, though not equal to him; for as a tree is known by its fruits, so is a good man by his good works, and a righteous man by doing

righteousness; and as good fruit does not make a good tree, but shows it to be good, so good works do not make a good man, nor a man's own righteousness make him a righteous man, but show him to be so.

1 John 3:8

He that committeth sin is of the devil. Not everyone that sins, or commits acts of sin, then every man is of the devil, because no man lives without the commission of sin; but he who makes sin his constant business, and the employment of his life, whose life is a continued series of sinning, he is of the devil; not as to origin and substance, or by proper generation, as some have literally understood the words; but by imitation, being like him, and so of him their father, doing his lusts, living continually in sin, as he does, and so resemble him, as children do their parents; and hereby also appear to be under his government and influence, to be led captive by him at his will, and so to belong to him, and such as will have their part and portion with him in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, so living and dying:

for the devil sinneth from the beginning;?not of his creation, for he was made by God a pure and holy creature; but from the beginning of the world, or near it, at least from the beginning of man's creation; for he not only sinned by rebelling against God himself, and by drawing in the rest of the apostate angels into the rebellion with him, but by tempting man, as soon as created, to sin against God: what was his first and particular sin is not certain, whether pride or envy, or what; seems to be, his not abiding in the truth, or an opposition to the truth of the Gospel, respecting the incarnation of the Son of God, mentioned in the following clause; see (John 8:44) ; however, he has been continually sinning ever since: he "sinneth"; he is always sinning, doing nothing else but sin; so that he that lives a vicious course of life is like him, and manifestly of him:

for this purpose the Son of God was manifested;?in human nature, as in (1 John 3:5) ; whence it appears that he was the Son of God before his incarnation, and so not by it; he did not become so through it, nor was he denominated such on account of it; he was not made the Son of God by it, but was manifested in it what he was before; and for this end:

that he might destroy the works of the devil;?and the devil himself, and all his dominion and power, and particularly his power over death, and death itself; and especially the sins of men, which are the works of the devil, which he puts them upon, influences them to do, and takes delight in; and which are destroyed by Christ, by his sacrifice and death, being taken, carried, removed away, finished, and made an end of by him; (See Gill on 1 John 3:5).

1 John 3:9

Whosoever is born of Elohim. In a figurative and spiritual sense; who are regenerated, or born from above; who are quickened by the grace of God, and have Christ formed in them; who are made partakers of the divine nature, and new creatures in Christ; which spiritual birth is not owing to men, to the power and will of men, but to the grace of God; and is sometimes ascribed to the Father, who of his own will and abundant mercy begets souls again to a lively

hope, and saves them by the washing of regeneration; and sometimes to Christ, who quickens whom he will, whose grace is implanted, and image stamped in it, and by whose resurrection from the dead men are begotten again; and chiefly, to the Spirit of God, who is the author of regeneration, and of the whole of sanctification: and such as are born of him are alive through him, the spirit of life entering into them, and live to God and upon Christ, and breathe after divine and spiritual things, and have their senses to discern them; they see, hear, feel, taste, and savour them; and desire the sincere milk of the word, for their nourishment and growth; and have every grace implanted in them, as faith, hope, and love: and of every such an one it is said, he

doth not commit sin;?does not make it his trade and business; it is not the constant course of his life; he does not live and walk in sin, or give up himself to it; he is not without the being of it in him, or free from acts of sin in his life and conversation, but he does not so commit it as to be the servant of it, a slave unto it, or to continue in it; and that for this reason:

for his seed remaineth in him; not the word of God, or the Gospel, though that is a seed which is sown by the ministers of it, and blessed by God, and by which he regenerates his people; and which having a place in their hearts, becomes the ingrafted word, and there abides, nor can it be rooted out; where it powerfully teaches to avoid sin, is an antidote against it, and a preservative from it: nor the Holy Spirit of God, though he is the author of the new birth, and the principle of all grace; and where he once is, he always abides; and through the power of his grace believers prevail against sin, and mortify the deeds of the body, and live: but rather the grace of the Spirit, the internal principle of grace in the soul, the new nature, or new man formed in the soul, is meant; which seminally contains all grace in it, and which, like seed, springs up and gradually increases, and always abides; and is pure and incorruptible, and neither sins itself, nor encourages sin, but opposes, checks, and prevents it:

and he cannot sin;?not that it is impossible for such a man to do acts of sin, or that it is possible for him to live without sin; for the words are not to be understood in the sense of those who plead for perfection in this life; for though the saints have perfection in Christ, yet not in themselves; they are not impeccable, they are not free from sin, neither from the being nor actings of it; sin is in them, lives in them, dwells in them, hinders all the good, and does all the mischief it can: or in such sense, as if the sins of believers were not sins; for though they are pardoned and expiated, and they are justified from them, yet they do not cease to be sins; they are equally contrary to the nature, will, and law of God, as well as the sins of others; and are oftentimes attended with more aggravated circumstances, and which God in a fatherly way takes notice of, and chastises for, and on the account of which he hides his face from them: nor does the phrase intend any particular single sin, which cannot be committed; though there are such, as sinning wilfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, or denying Christ to be the Saviour of sinners, and a sacrifice for sin, and hatred of a Christian brother as such, and sinning the sin unto death, or the unpardonable sin; neither of which can be committed by a regenerate man: nor is the meaning only, though it is a sense that will very well bear, and agrees with the context, that such persons cannot sin as unregenerate men do; that is, live in a

continued course of sinning, and with pleasure, and without reluctance, and so as to lie in it, as the whole world does: but rather the meaning is, he that is born of God, as he is born of God, or that which is born of God in him, the new man, or new creature, cannot sin; for that is pure and holy; there is nothing sinful in it, nor can anything that is sinful come out of it, or be done by it; it is the workmanship of the Holy Spirit of God; it is a good work, and well pleasing: in the sight of God, who is of purer eyes than to behold sin with delight; and an incorruptible seed, which neither corrupts nor is corrupted; and though it is as yet an imperfect work, it is not impure: the reason of the impeccability of the regenerate man, as such, is

because he is born of God: for that which is born of God in him, does, under the influence of the Spirit, power, and grace of God, preserve him from the temptations of Satan, the pollutions of the world, and the corruptions of his own heart; see (1 John 5:18) ; which the Vulgate Latin version there renders, “the generation of God”, meaning regeneration, or that which is born of God, “preserveth him”: this furnishes out a considerable argument for the perseverance of the saints.

1 John 3:10

In this the children of God are manifest by regenerating grace, and not sinning, in the sense before explained, in consequence of it: adoption is an act of God’s grace and sovereign will; it is secret in his own heart, and is secured in divine predestination, and in the covenant of grace, and is antecedent to regeneration: regeneration and faith do not make men the children of God, but manifest them to be so; adoption makes them the children of God, and entitles them to the inheritance; regeneration gives them the nature of the children of God, and makes them meet for it, and manifests their right unto it; not to the men of the world, but to themselves and other saints:

and the children of the devil; such as imitate him, do his will and his lusts, and are openly under his power and influence; these are distinguishable from regenerate persons, and the children of God, by their lives and conversations; so the people of the nations of the world are called, (ywnb) , “the children of Samael”, and the serpent, by the Jews F13, which are with them the names of the devil.

Whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God: that is, he does; not appear to be born of

God, who does not by faith lay hold on the righteousness of Christ for his justification before God, and acceptance with him; and who does not do works of righteousness in faith from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God; for where regenerating grace is, there will be such graces and such practices:

neither he that loveth not his brother; for as he that loveth God, and Christ, and the brethren, appears manifestly to be born again, and to have passed from death to life, so he that does not is in darkness, in a state of unregeneracy, and walks and continues therein; for was he born again, he would be taught of God to love the saints; see (1 John 4:7) (3:14) (2:11) .

1 John 3:11

For this is the message sent from God by Christ, or what he in his ministry declared, and is the commandment which was so frequently urged by him, (John 13:34) (John 15:12 John

15:17) ; that ye have heard from the beginning; of the preaching of the Gospel to them, and of their conversion; see (1 John 2:7) ;

that we should love one another; to which the command of Christ, the reason with which it is enforced, and the early notice of it, should engage.

1 John 3:12

Not as Cain, that is, let us not be like him, or do as he did, hate the brethren. The apostle illustrates brotherly love by its contrary, in the instance of Cain, who was the first instance and example of hatred of the brethren, and of fratricide, and a very detestable one, by which he would dissuade from so vile and abominable a practice:

[who] was of that wicked one;?Satan, a child of his, an imitator of him, one that appeared to be under his influence, and to belong unto him. So the Jews say of Cain F14, that

“he was of the side of the serpent (the old serpent the devil); and as the way of the serpent is to slay and to kill, so Cain immediately became a murderer.”

And again,

“because Cain came from the side of the angel of death, he slew his brother F15;”

though they say that he afterwards repented, and became worthy of paradise F16.

And slew his brother;?see (Genesis 4:8) . According to the tradition of the Jews F17 he struck a stone into his forehead, and killed him: and wherefore slew he him??what was the cause and occasion of it? what moved him to it?

because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous;?or “his work”, as the Ethiopic version reads: the sacrifice which he offered up, which, though it was not evil as to the matter and substance of it, yet was so, being offered with an evil mind, and with an hypocritical heart, and without faith in the sacrifice of Christ, and so was unacceptable to God; whereas, on the other hand, the sacrifice his brother brought was offered up in the faith of Christ, by which he obtained a testimony that he was righteous, and that the work he did was a righteous work, being done in faith, and so was acceptable to God; which Cain perceiving, was filled with envy, and this put him upon killing him. The Jews F18 relate the occasion of it after this manner;

“Cain said to Abel his brother, come, and let us go out into the open field; and when they were both out in the open field, Cain answered and said to Abel his brother, there is no judgment, nor Judge, nor another world; neither will a good reward be given to the righteous, nor

vengeance be taken on the wicked; neither was the world created in mercy, nor is it governed in mercy; or why is thy offering kindly accepted, and mine is not kindly accepted? Abel answered and said to Cain, there is judgment, and there is a Judge, and there is another world; and there are gifts of a good reward to the righteous, and vengeance will be taken on the wicked; and the world was created in mercy, and in mercy it is governed, for according to the fruit of good works it is governed; because that my works are better than thine, my offering is kindly accepted, and thine is not kindly accepted; and they both strove together in the field, and Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.”

In the Hebrew text in (Genesis 4:8) ; there is an extraordinary large pause, as if a discourse of this kind, which passeth between the two brothers, was to be inserted. Philo the Jew says F19, that in the contention or dispute between Cain and Abel, Abel attributed all things to God, and Cain ascribed everything to himself; so that the controversy was about grace and works, as now; and as then Cain hated his brother upon this account, so now carnal men hate and persecute the saints, because they will not allow their works to be the cause of justification and salvation: and from hence also it may be observed, that a work may be, as to the matter of it, good, and yet as to its circumstances, and the end and view of it, evil.

1 John 3:13

Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.?] By “the world” is meant the inhabitants of the world, the wicked part of them; these hate the saints, though without a cause, any just cause, and for no other reason, but because they are chosen and called out of the world, and do not live the wicked life they do: and this hatred of theirs is not at all to be wondered at; so it was from the beginning, and has been in all ages since; immediately upon the fall there was enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, which showed itself in Cain, the instance just given, who hated and murdered his righteous brother; Ishmael, that was born after the flesh, persecuted Isaac, that was born after the Spirit; and as it was then, it is now, the Jews persecuted the prophets of old, and hated Christ and his apostles. This is the common lot of all the saints, of all that will live godly in Christ Jesus; and therefore it should not be reckoned a strange and unusual thing; it always was so, even from the beginning, as soon as ever there were two sorts of persons, good and bad, righteous and wicked. This is a corollary or conclusion drawn from the above instance of Cain.

1 John 3:14

We know that we have passed from death to life, from a death in sin, a moral or spiritual death; which lies in a separation from God, Father, Son, and Spirit; in an alienation from the life of God; in a loss of the image of God, of righteousness, holiness, and knowledge, in which man was created; in a privation of all true sense of sin, and in a servitude to it, which is unto death, and is no other than death: and from a legal death, or death in a legal sense, under the sentence of which all men are, as considered in Adam; and which God’s elect are sensible of, when convinced by the Spirit of God, and are in their own apprehension as dead men. Now in regeneration, which is a quickening of sinners dead in sin, a resurrection of them from the

dead, the people of God pass from this death of sin, and the law, to a life of sanctification, having principles of grace and life implanted in them; and to a life of justification, and of faith on Christ, as the Lord their righteousness; and to a life of communion with Christ; and to such a life as is to the glory of Christ; and to a right to eternal life. And this passing from the one to the other is not of themselves, it is not their own act; no man can quicken himself, or raise himself from the dead; in this men are passive: and so the words are rendered in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, "we know that we are translated"; that is, by God the Father, who delivers from the power of darkness, and death, and translates into the kingdom of his dear Son, which is a state of light and life; or by Christ, who is the resurrection and the life, who is the author of the resurrection from the death of sin to a life of grace; or by the Spirit of life from Christ, by whom souls are quickened, and of whom they are born again: and this passage from death to life, or regeneration, is a thing that may be, and is known by the regenerate man; who, as he knows surely, that whereas he was blind he now sees, so that whereas he was dead in sin, he is now alive; and among other things it may be known by this,

because we love the brethren: this is not the cause of passing from death to life, but the effect of it, and so an evidence of it, or that by which it is known; brotherly love being what the saints are taught of God in regeneration, and is a fruit of the Spirit of God, and is what true faith works by, and is what shows itself as soon as anything in a regenerate man; nor can anyone love the saints, as such, as brethren in Christ, unless he is born again; a man may indeed love a saint, as a natural relative, as a good neighbour, and because he has done him some good offices, and because of some excellent qualities in him, as a man of learning, sense, candour, civility though he has not the grace of God; but to love him as a child of God, a member of Christ, and because he has his image stamped on him, no man can do this, unless he has received the grace of God; so that this is a certain evidence of it:

he that loveth not [his] brother, abideth in death; in the death of sin, in a state of nature and unregeneracy; under the sentence of condemnation and death; and he is liable to eternal death, which is the wages of sin, under the power of which such a manifestly is. This is said to deter from hatred, as also what follows.

1 John 3:15

Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, a soul murderer, as the Ethiopic version renders it; not only of himself, for every sinner, by sinning, wrongs and destroys his own soul; but of his brother whom he hates: he is a murderer of him in his heart, even as he that lusts after a woman hath committed adultery with her in his heart, out of which arise murders, as well as adulteries; it is not only taking away life, but also causeless anger, malice, and hatred, that is a breach of the sixth command; see (Matthew 5:21 Matthew 5:22 Matthew 5:28) (15:19) ;

and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him; he has not the grace of life, or the beginning of eternal life in him; he has no meetness for it, being unregenerate; and no right unto it, being unrighteous; nor has he the earnest and pledge of it, being destitute of the Spirit of God; all which a regenerate man has, and has them abiding in him: not but that the sin of

murder may be forgiven; a man guilty of it may truly repent, and have pardoning grace applied unto him, and enjoy eternal life, through the grace of the Spirit, and the blood and righteousness of Christ; but without these he is so far from having eternal life, that he is not only punishable with a corporeal death, according to the laws of God and man; but he is exposed unto, and will die the second, or an eternal death.

1 John 3:16

Hereby perceive we the love [of God] The phrase “of God” is not in the Oriental versions, nor in the Greek copies, but is in the Complutensian edition, and in the Vulgate Latin version, and is favoured by the Syriac version, which reads, “by this we know his love to us”; and so the Ethiopic version, “by this we know his love”. That is, the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is truly and properly God, the great God, the mighty God, the true God, and God over all, blessed for ever. His love is manifested to his people, and perceived by them in various instances; but in nothing is it more clearly seen than in the following one:

because he laid down his life for us: of the life of Christ, and his laying it down in the room of his people, (See Gill on 15:13), which shows his love, his free grace and favour; for this arose not from any merit or worth in the persons he died for; not from their love, loveliness, or duty, but from his rich mercy, and the great love wherewith he loved them; and which, though it cannot be equalled, should be imitated:

and we ought to lay down [our] lives for the brethren: not in such sense, or for such ends and purposes, as Christ laid down his life for us; for no man, as by giving his money, so by laying down his life, can redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him: but the meaning is, that saints ought to risk their lives, and expose themselves to dangers, for the sake of their brethren, when they are called to it, and the case requires it: as Priscilla and Aquila laid down their necks, or ventured their lives for the Apostle Paul, (Romans 16:3 Romans 16:4); and they should also, when called unto it, freely lay down their lives in the cause of Christ, and for the sake of his Gospel, for the gaining of souls to Christ, and for the confirming of the faith of the brethren in him, as the apostles of Christ, and the martyrs of Jesus, have done; this is an argument for brotherly love, in the highest instance of it, taken from the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, than which nothing is more forcible, or can lay a greater obligation on the saints

But whoso hath this world's good? The possessions of this world, worldly substance, the temporal good things of it; for there are some things in it, which are honestly, pleasantly, and profitably good, when used lawfully, and not abused, otherwise they are to the owner's hurt: or “the living of this world”; that which the men of the world give up themselves to, are bent upon, and pursue after; or on which men live, and by which life is maintained, and preserved, and made comfortable in the present state of things; such as meat, drink, apparel, money, houses, lands The Ethiopic version renders it, “he that hath the government of this world”; as if it pointed at a person that is in some high office of worldly honour and profit, and is both great and rich; but the words are not to be restrained to such an one only, but refer to any man that has any share of the outward enjoyments of life; that has not only a competency for himself

and family, but something to spare, and especially that has an affluence of worldly substance; but of him that has not, it is not required; for what a man distributes ought to be his own, and not another's, and in proportion to what he has, or according to his ability:

and seeth his brother have need;?meaning, not merely a brother in that strict and natural relation, or bond of consanguinity; though such an one in distress ought to be, in the first place, regarded, for no man should hide himself from, overlook and neglect his own flesh and blood; but any, and every man, "his neighbour", as the Ethiopic version reads, whom he ought to love as himself; and especially a brother in a spiritual relation, or one that is of the household of faith: if he has need; that is, is naked and destitute of daily food, has not the common supplies of life, and what nature requires; and also, whose circumstances are low and mean, though not reduced to the utmost extremity; and if he sees him in this distress with his own eyes, or if he knows it, hears of it, and is made acquainted with it, otherwise he cannot be blameworthy for not relieving him.

And shutteth up his bowels [of compassion] from him;?hardens his heart, turns away his eyes, and shuts his hand; has no tenderness in him for, nor sympathy with his distressed brother, nor gives him any succour: and this shows, that when relief is given, it should be not in a morose and churlish manner, with reflection and reproach, but with affection and pity; and where there is neither one nor the other,

how dwelleth the love of God in him??neither the love with which God loves men; for if this was shed abroad in him, and had a place, and dwelt in him, and he was properly affected with it, it would warm his heart, and loosen his affections, and cause his bowels to move to his poor brother: nor the love with which God is loved; for if he does not love his brother whom he sees in distress, how should he love the invisible God? (1 John 4:20) ; nor that love which God requires of him, which is to love his neighbour as himself.

1 John 3:18

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, Which though it holds good of love to God, and to Jesus Christ, yet here is to be understood of love to the brethren, as the context shows; and so the Syriac version reads, "let us not love one another in word" that is, without the heart, or with a double heart; speaking one thing with the lip, and designing another thing in the heart; speaking peaceably with the mouth, and with the heart laying wait; or we should not love in this manner "only"; and so the Arabic version of De Dieu adds. It is very lawful, and right to express our love to one another, and to all men in words, to give good words, and use courteous language, and speak in a kind, tender, and affectionate manner, and especially to persons in distress; but this should not be all, it will be of no avail to say to such, be warmed and filled, and give them nothing but these good words, nothing to warm and fill them with; see

(James 2:15 James 2:16) ;

but in deed and in truth;?for true love is a laborious and operative grace, hence we read of the work and labour of love; it shows itself by the saints serving one another, in spirituals; as by

bearing one another's burdens, forbearing with, and forgiving one another, praying for each other, and building up one another on their most holy faith; exhorting each other to the duties of religion, and not suffering sins upon one another, but admonish in love, and restore with meekness; and in temporals, distributing to the necessities of the saints, ministering: to them of their worldly substance, and supplying their daily wants: and this is loving "in deed", or "in work"; this is actual love, love in fact, and what is apparent and evident: and it is "in truth", when it is in reality, and not in show only; and when it is cordially and heartily done, with cheerfulness, and without grudging.

1 John 3:19

And hereby we know that we are of the truth By the saints loving one another in deed and in truth, they know, as the cause is known by the effect, that they are of God, who is the true God, the God of truth, and cannot lie, and is truth itself; that they are the children of God, and are born of him, since they love those that are, and every like loves it's like; and that they are of Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life; that they belong to him, are his, since they have his Spirit, as appears by his fruits in them, and this, among the rest, love to the brethren; and that they are his disciples, which others, even all men know, as well as themselves, by their mutual brotherly love; and that they are of the Gospel, which is truth, and the word of truth; that they are begotten, and born again, according to the will and grace of God by it, and are on the side of it, and can do nothing against, but all for it; and that they are true, sincere, and upright persons, true believers in Christ, whose faith works by love, and are real lovers of him, and his, since they love not in word only, but in deed and in truth.

And shall assure our hearts before him;?or "persuade our hearts": arrive to a full assurance of faith, hope, and understanding, that we are of the truth, do belong to God, are loved by him with an everlasting love, are chosen by him unto salvation, and are his adopted and regenerated ones, having passed from death to life, of which brotherly love is a sure evidence, (1 John 3:14) . Some render the words "shall pacify", or "make our hearts tranquil": or "quiet"; this only the blood of Christ can do, and does, being sprinkled on the conscience: he only has a quiet mind, or true peace of conscience, that looks to the righteousness of Christ for justification, and deals with his blood for the full and free remission of his sins: it is true indeed, that one that loves his brother heartily and sincerely, has peace of mind in it, though not for it; when, on the other hand, there is no peace to the wicked man, that hates his brother; for where there is envying, malice, hatred, and strife, there is no true peace, pleasure, and comfort, but confusion, uneasiness, distraction, and every evil work. Or this passage may refer to that holy confidence before God, which true believers in Christ, and cordial lovers of the brethren, have; both now at the throne of grace, where they can come with boldness, intrepidity, and freedom, to ask for what they want, and confidently believe they shall receive what is proper and needful for them; and also hereafter, at the throne of judgment, and in the day of judgment, when they shall have boldness, and not be ashamed before the Judge at his coming; who will particularly take notice of their love in feeding, clothing, and visiting the least of his brethren, which he takes as done to himself.

1 John 3:20

For if our heart condemn us Of want of love to the brethren, and of hypocrisy in it, as well as of any other sin; for the conscience, which is meant by the heart here, is accuser, witness and judge; it accuses of the evil of sin, and is as good as a thousand witnesses; and upon its own testimony pronounces guilty, and condemns.

God is greater than our heart: for he is the Maker of it, and he has the power over it, and the management of it; it is in his hands, and to be turned by him as he pleases; and he is the searcher and trier of it; and besides, is a swifter witness than conscience, and a superior Judge unto it.

And knoweth all things; that are in the heart; the principles of actions, and all the actions of men, for which their hearts condemn them; and all the sinfulness in them, and the aggravations of them; wherefore, as he knows them more perfectly, he judges of them more exactly, and will reprove more sharply, and condemn more severely for them: hence, if the condemnation of men's hearts and consciences be so very great, as sometimes to be intolerable and insupportable, what will be the righteous judgment, and dreadful condemnation of God? how fearful a thing will it be to fall into the hands of the living God! this sense is confirmed by the Syriac version rendering it, "how much greater is God than our hearts?" there is another sense given by some, which is not by way of terror, but comfort, and that is, that if the hearts of believers accuse, reprove, and condemn for sin through unbelief, or want of clear view of pardon and righteousness by Christ, God is greater, as in power, so in knowledge, than the hearts of men; and he knows the thoughts he has towards them, which are of peace, and not of evil; the covenant he has made with his Son, of which he is ever mindful; and what his Son has done, that he has made full satisfaction for sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness: so that let sin, or Satan, or the world, or the law, or their own hearts condemn them, there is no condemnation of any avail unto them. But the former sense seems best to agree with the context.

1 John 3:21

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not Which must be understood, not of a stupidity of mind, as is in unregenerate men, who have no sense of sin, no sorrow for it, or remorse of conscience on account of it; or as is in them who are past feeling; having their consciences seared as with a red hot iron; such cannot be entitled to the advantages that follow; nor is it of persons the apostle speaks, but of himself, and Christians, the beloved of the Lord, and one another, who had an experience of the grace of God upon their souls, and made a profession of religion: nor does it design such a purity of heart and life in believers, as that their hearts do not smite, reproach, and condemn them for sin at any time, for such a state of perfection is not to be attained to and expected in this life; but rather a conscience purged by the blood of Christ, or an heart sprinkled from an evil conscience by that blood, which speaks peace and pardon, so that there is no more conscience of sin, for the removal of which that is applied; and this gives boldness and confidence at the throne of grace: though it is best of all to confine it to the case

of brotherly love; for the sense is not, if our heart condemn us not of anything but of the want of brotherly love, or insincerity in it,

[then] have we confidence towards God;?or with him, at the throne of his grace: such can draw nigh to him, and stand before him with an holy and humble confidence, when such as hate the brethren, as Cain did, in whom the apostle instances, and those that go in his way, cannot; whose heart condemned him, his conscience smote him, and he went from the presence of the Lord; but those that love the brethren have confidence of their relation to God; by this they know their regeneration, and by that their adoption, and so that they are the children of God; and can therefore draw nigh to God as their Father, and call him so; they can come with an holy boldness and intrepidity of mind before him, and use a (parrhsia) , “freedom of speech”, with him; can tell him all their mind, pour out their souls unto him, and lay before him their case and wants; they have confidence of his power, faithfulness, and willingness to supply their need, and fulfil all his promises to them, and that their prayers will be heard, answered, and regarded by him in his own time.

1 John 3:22

And whatsoever we ask we receive of him, according to his promise, (Matthew 7:7) ; that is, whatever is asked according to the will of God, in the name of Christ, and for his sake, and in faith, nothing wavering, but believing in God, in his covenant and promises, for these are provisos in the case; and such as ask in this way may exercise an holy confidence that they shall receive; and indeed they do receive what they ask for; see (1 John 5:14) (John 14:13 John 14:14) (Matthew 21:22) ;

because we keep his commandments;?not that keeping the commands of God is the meritorious cause of receiving anything from him; for when men have done all they can, or are assisted to do, they are but unprofitable servants in point of merit: whatever is received from God, as it is in consequence of asking, so it is entirely owing to his own grace and favour, and for the sake of Christ; but keeping the commands of God is a necessary adjunct, or, as Calvin on the text calls it, an inseparable accident, or what necessarily belongs unto, and enters into the character of such, who are heard and answered by God, and receive at his hands; for there is a great deal of truth in what the Jews say to the blind man, (John 9:31) ; and which may serve as a comment on these words:

and do those things that are pleasing in his sight;?as keeping of his commandments is; not that these things ingratiate into the love and favour of God, or are the causes and conditions of it, for the love of God is prior to anything of this kind; nor are they the causes of men’s acceptance with God, for the acceptance both of persons and services is only in Christ the beloved; but these things are what God approves of, when done in faith, from a principle of love, and with a view to his glory: and since he hears such persons that are worshippers of him, and do his will, and has promised good things to them; this is therefore a reason strengthening their confidence in him, that what they ask they shall receive.

1 John 3:23

And this is his commandment, Having mentioned the keeping of the commandments of God, the apostle proceeds to show what they are; that they are faith in Christ, and love to one another; which two are reduced to one, because they are inseparable; where the one is, the other is; faith works by love.

That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ; Christ is the object of faith, and he is no, as he is Jesus, a Saviour; faith deals with him as such, and will have no other Saviour but he: and now to believe in him, is not merely to believe that he is the Son of God, the true Messiah, the Saviour of the world, that he is come in the flesh, has suffered, and died, and rose again from the dead, is ascended into heaven, and is set down at the right hand of God, makes intercession for his people, and will come again to judge the quick and dead; but it is to go forth in special and spiritual acts upon him, such as looking at him, coming to him, venturing on him, trusting in him for life and salvation, committing all into his hands, and expecting all from him. And this is called a "commandment", and comes under the notion of one; not that it is properly a law, or belongs to the law; for faith in Christ Jesus is a fruit of electing grace, and a blessing of the covenant of grace; it is the free gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit, and is peculiar to the elect of God, and sheep of Christ; and so cannot belong to the law of works; but, as the Hebrew words, (hrwt) , and (hwum) , both signify any doctrine, and instruction in general; see (Psalms 19:7 Psalms 19:8) ; so the word here used designs an evangelical doctrine, a divine instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Gospel, which declares that he that believes in Christ shall be saved; and so the word is used for a doctrine in this epistle, (1 John 2:7) ; and that of the next command or doctrine, which follows,

and love one another as he gave us commandment; that is, as Christ taught and instructed his disciples, (John 13:34) (15:17) .

1 John 3:24

And he that keepeth his commandments attends to those instructions and declarations concerning faith in Christ, and love to the brethren, and acts according to them:

dwelleth in him, and he in them; that is, he dwells in Christ, and Christ dwells in him; the same is said of believing in Christ under the figurative expressions of eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, (See Gill on John 6:56);

and hereby we know that he abideth in us; or dwelleth in us, as before,

by the Spirit which he hath given us; which if understood of private Christians, as the preceding verses incline to, the sense is, that union to Christ, and the continuance of it, or his indwelling as a fruit of union, and the permanency of that, are evidenced by the Spirit of God; who is given in consequence of union and relation to Christ, as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification, of faith and love, of adoption, and as the earnest of the heavenly inheritance; but if of the apostles and ministers of the word, it may regard the gifts of the Holy Spirit bestowed

on them, fitting them for their work and office, and who is a spirit of truth, and not of error; and by having and enjoying these, they knew that Christ abode in them, and had reason to believe, according to his promise, that he would be with them, and with his ministering:

servants in succession, to the end of the world; and this sense seems to be encouraged by the former part of the following chapter.

24 Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

1 John 4

1 John 4:1

Beloved, believe not every spirit. The apostle having mentioned the word "spirit" in the latter part of the preceding chapter, takes an occasion from thence to return to what he had been suggesting in the "second" chapter, concerning the many antichrists that then were, and whom he points out, and here cautions against. By "every spirit" he means, either every doctrine that is pretended to come from the Spirit of God, or every teacher, who professes to be qualified and sent by him, and to have his light, knowledge, and doctrine from him. Every true minister of the Gospel has the Spirit, and the gifts of the Spirit, more or less, to qualify him for his work; he is separated, and called to it by him, and receives his spiritual light and knowledge from him; it is he that teaches him sound doctrine, and leads him into all truth, as it is in Jesus, and brings every necessary truth to his remembrance; and who succeeds his ministrations to the good of souls: but there are some who call themselves the ministers of the Gospel, who, though they may have some natural abilities, and a share of human learning, and a notional knowledge of things, yet have never received either grace or gifts from the Spirit; nor have they been ever called by him; nor are their ministrations according to that divine word which is inspired by him, nor attended with his demonstration and power; wherefore, though some professing to have the Spirit of Christ are to be believed, yet not everyone; and though the Spirit is not to be quenched in any, nor prophesying to be despised, yet care should be taken what is heard and received: some persons are so obstinate and incredulous as not to believe anything that is declared, be the evidence what it will; as the Jews would not believe Christ and his apostles, though what they said agreed with Moses and the prophets, and was confirmed by miracles; and others are too credulous; at once receive every teacher, and embrace every upstart doctrine: this they should not do,

but try the spirits whether they are of God; not by human reason, especially as carnal and unsanctified; for though the doctrines of the Gospel are not contrary to true reason, they are above it, and not to be judged of by it, and are disapproved of and rejected by carnal reason; but by the word of God, which is the standard of all doctrine; and whatever agrees with that is to be received, and what does not should be rejected. And so to do is very commendable, as appears from the instance of the Bereans, who on this account are said to be more noble than those of Thessalonica, (Acts 17:11); and from the commendation of the church at Ephesus, (

Revelation 2:2) . And this is what every believer, every private Christian should do; to them it belongs to read and search the Scriptures, and prove all things, and judge for themselves of the truth of doctrine; and to such a probation or trial of the spirits, spiritual light, knowledge, judgment, sense, experience, and divine guidance are necessary, which should be asked of God, and an increase thereof; and all such diligent searchers, and humble inquirers, are capable of making judgment of persons and doctrines, whether they are from the Spirit of God or not, for the Spirit of God never speaks contrary to his word: and the reason why such a trial should be made is,

because many false prophets are gone out into the world: such who pretended either to a revelation of future things, and to foretell things to come; or rather to a gift of prophesying, or preaching in Christ's name, to be "prophets" and spiritual men, and ministers of the word, but were "false" ones; who either predicted what did not come to pass, or rather preached false doctrine, by corrupting the word, and handling it deceitfully, and so imposed upon and ruined the souls of others, as well as deceived their own: and there were not only one, or two, or a few of these, but "many", as our Lord had foretold, (Matthew 24:11 Matthew 24:24) ; and which makes the reason the stronger for not believing every spirit, but trying them; and the rather, since they were not sent of God, not called out by his churches, but were "gone out" of themselves; of their own heads, and without any mission from God or man: and "into the world" too; they were in every part of it, and especially where there were any churches of Christ; into which they first crept in privily, and at unawares, but afterwards became public preachers of the word, and then separating from them, set up openly in the world for themselves.

1 John 4:2

Hereby know ye the Spirit of Elohim. This is a rule by which believers may know whether a man professing to have the Spirit of God, and to be called and sent by him, and whether the doctrine he preaches, is of him or not:

every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; or of the Spirit of God; that is, every doctrine which carries this truth in it; or every man that owns, and professes, and publishes this doctrine concerning Christ, is on the side of God and truth; and which contains several articles in it, respecting the person and office of Christ; as that he existed before he came in the flesh, not in the human nature, or as man, or as an angel, but as the Son of God, as a divine person, being truly and properly God; so that this confession takes in his divine sonship, and proper deity, and also his true and real humanity; that the Messiah was incarnate, against the Jews, and was God and man in one person; and that he was really man, and not in appearance only, against the heretics of those times: and it also includes his offices, as that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, the Messiah, which the Jews denied, and that he was the anointed prophet, priest, and King; and so is a confession or acknowledgment of all the doctrines of the Gospel, which came by him, as a prophet; and of his satisfaction, sacrifice, and intercession, as a priest; and of all his ordinances and commands as a King; and that he is the only Saviour and Redeemer of men. Now, whoever owns and declares this system of truth, "is of God"; not that everyone that assents unto this, or preaches it, is born of God; a man may

believe, and confess all this, as the devils themselves do, and yet be destitute of the grace of God; but the spirit, or doctrine, which contains these things in it, is certainly of God, or comes from him; or whoever brings these truths with him, and preaches them, he is, so far as he does so, on the side of God and truth, and to be regarded.

1 John 4:3

And every spirit that confesseth not; The proper deity and sonship of Christ, his true and real humanity, and his Messiahship; or any of his offices, doctrines, and ordinances; or his satisfaction and righteousness; or that peace, pardon, justification, life, and salvation, are by him; all which are meant by what follows,

that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh: this clause is left out in the Ethiopic version, and that without hurting the sense, since it is easily supplied from the preceding verse; and the Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin version, only read "Jesus": and the latter reads the whole thus, "and every spirit that dissolves Jesus"; that separates the two natures, human and divine, in him, and makes two persons of them; or denies either of them, either that he is truly God, or really man, or denies him to be Jesus, the Saviour; who, as much as in him lies, destroys his person, office, and work, and makes void his obedience, sufferings, and death: is not of God; neither he nor his doctrine are of God; his doctrine cannot come from God, being contrary to the word of God; and he himself is neither born of God, nor on his side.

And this is that [spirit] of antichrist: who is against Christ, or opposes himself to him; as he who denies his sonship, his deity, his humanity, his offices, and his grace, manifestly does; every doctrine that is calculated against these truths is the spirit and doctrine of antichrist:

whereof you have heard that it should come, and even now already is in the world in the false teachers, the forerunners of antichrist; (See Gill on 1 John 2:18).

1 John 4:4

Ye are of God, little children; This, with what follows, is said for the comfort of the saints, and to deliver them from the fears of being drawn aside by the delusions of the false prophets, and antichrists; since they belonged to God, were his elect, and therefore could not be finally and totally seduced; they were the children of God by adopting grace, and could not become the servants of men; they were born of God, and so were kept by the power of God unto salvation, as all that are begotten unto a lively hope are; they were enlightened by the Spirit of God, and had a discerning of truth from error, and therefore could not be imposed upon:

and have overcome them; the false prophets, being in a good cause, fighting the good fight of faith, and having good weapons, particularly the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and invincible arguments from thence; and also gracious assistance from the Spirit of God, who gives a mouth that none can shut, and wisdom that none can resist; as well as an inward experience of the truth, and power of Gospel doctrines: a testimony within themselves, which will stand the whole shock and opposition of the enemy: the Vulgate Latin version reads, "and

have overcome him”; antichrist, whose spirit was then in the world; or the world itself, or Satan, the god of the world; and so the Ethiopic version reads, “and have overcome the evil one”, as in (1 John 2:13 1 John 2:14) ; the reason of which victory, and which adds to the comfort and support of saints in their present warfare, is,

because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world;?by “he that is in the world” is meant either the devil, the prince and god of the world, and who goes up and down in it, dwells in the hearts of the men of it, under whose influence they are, and in whom he works effectually; or antichrist, whose spirit was now in the world, and whose doctrine was propagated by the false teachers, in whom he began to appear; but he that is in the saints, either God who dwells in them, and they in him, (1 John 4:15) ; is mightier than the man of sin, and his emissaries, to keep and preserve from all corruptions, and every false way; or Christ, who dwells in their hearts by faith, and is stronger than the strong man armed, and able to save and deliver out of his hands; or the Spirit of God; and so the Arabic version reads, “the Spirit that is in you”; who is in the saints, as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification, as a spirit of adoption, and the earnest of their inheritance; he is able to carry on the work of grace in them, and finish it, and will do it; and he, as a spirit of truth, is more powerful than the spirit of error; and when the enemy comes in like a flood, or pours in a flood of errors and heresies, he lifts up a standard against him, causes him to fly, and secures the saints from being carried away with it: compare with this the Septuagint version of (Psalms 124:1 Psalms 124:2) , “if it had not been the Lord who was on our side”; which render it thus, “if the Lord had not been in us”.

1 John 4:5

They are of the world; That is, the false prophets and teachers that were gone into the world, and had the spirit of antichrist in them; these were as they were when they came into the world, under the pollution, guilt, and dominion of sin, in a state of unregeneracy, carnality, and darkness; they properly belonged unto it, and walked after the course of it, and were under the influence of the god of it, who led them into error; and were sensual, and indulged themselves in worldly lusts, and were seeking after worldly things; supposed that gain was godliness, and had men’s persons in admiration because of advantage; their nature and disposition, their principles and practices, and their ends and views, were worldly; and were quite different from Christ and his apostles, (John 17:14 John 17:16) ,

therefore speak they of the world;?they speak the wisdom of the world, or that in which the world thinks wisdom lies, and cry up for true knowledge, and right principles; and this they do with the enticing words of man’s wisdom, or in words which man’s wisdom teacheth; speaking great swelling words of vanity, which take with vain and carnal minds; and preach doctrines suited to their own taste, and the taste of others, as carnal and worldly men; such as the purity of human nature, in its first conception and birth, its freedom from any original corruption, and from any concern with the sin of Adam, only with actual sin of its own; and the power of it to do that which is good, keep the law of God, and obtain his favour; the non-necessity of any internal work of efficacious grace, a reformation of life and manners being thought sufficient to

render a man acceptable to God, and prepare him for eternal happiness; the doctrine of justification and salvation by works; all which are pleasing to carnal men: hence it follows,

and the world heareth them; the wicked of the world; worldly and unregenerate men attend on their ministry, approve of what they deliver, and receive it with pleasure, and believe it: this expresses both the quality of the hearers of false teachers, that they are that part of the world, the worse part of it, which lies in wickedness; and the quantity of them, the greater part of the world, as it was foretold by Christ, and his apostles, that they should deceive many, that many should follow their pernicious ways, and that they should draw many disciples after them; wherefore the numbers that attend such persons, as it need not be wondered at, since both preachers and hearers, and the doctrines preached and heard, are all alike, they are of the world, so it should not be stumbling to the people of God.

1 John 4:6

We are of Elohim; Not only as the chosen of God, the children of God, regenerated ones, and believers, but as ministers of the Gospel; they were chosen, and called, and sent of God to preach the Gospel, and were qualified for it, by gifts received from him, and had their doctrine from him, as well as their commission and mission: they were not of the world, and therefore did not speak of the world, nor things suited to worldly men; but being of God, they spoke the words of God, which were agreeable to him, which made for the glory of the three divine Persons, and were consistent with the divine perfections; which maintained the honour and dignity of the persons in the Godhead; which magnified the grace of God in salvation, and debased the creature:

he that knoweth God;?not only as the God of nature and providence, but as in Christ, and that not only professionally, but practically; that has an experimental knowledge of him, that knows him as exercising lovingkindness, having tasted of his grace and goodness; that knows him so as to trust in him, and love him; for such a knowledge of God is meant, as has true real affection to him joined with it; so that it is he that loves his name, his glory, his truths, and his ordinances: he

heareth us:?not only externally, constantly attending on the ministry of the word, as such do; but internally, understanding what is heard, receiving it in love, cordially embracing it, and firmly believing it, and acting according to it:

he that is not of God; who is not born of God, but is as he was when born into the world, and is of it: and who does not righteousness, nor loves his brother, nor confesses the divinity, humanity, and offices of Christ, and so is not on the side of truth, nor has the truth of grace in him; see (1 John 3:10) (4:3) ; such a man

heareth not us;?he is a mere natural man, a carnal and unregenerate man; and such an one cannot attend on a Gospel ministry, or receive Gospel doctrines, which are with him senseless, stupid, and foolish notions, yea, foolishness itself; nor can he know and understand them through ignorance, and want, of a spiritual discerning; they are hard sayings, and he cannot

hear, nor bear them; and when this is the case, it is a plain token of unregeneracy, and that such persons are not of God; see (John 8:47) .

Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error;?the difference between truth and error; can distinguish one from another, and discern who are the true ministers of Christ, and who are the false teachers; for not only the word of God, the Scriptures of truth, are the test and standard, the touchstone to bring them to, and try them by; and the doctrines they severally bring show who they are; but even their very hearers distinguish them. Spirits, or men pretending to the Spirit of God, may be known in a great measure by their followers; they who have the spirit of error, and are of the world, they are followed, and caressed, and applauded by the men of the world, by unregenerate persons; they who have the spirit of truth, and are of God, they are heard and approved of, and embraced by spiritual men, by such who know God in Christ, and have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

1 John 4:7

Beloved, let us love one another. The apostle having finished what he proposed to say concerning the trying of spirits, returns to his former exhortation to brotherly love, and which comes with fresh force and strength; for since worldly men follow, hear, embrace, and cleave to the false teachers; such as are of God, and on the side of truth, should love one another, and their faithful ministers, and stand fast in one spirit by the truths of the Gospel, in opposition to every error:

for love is of God: to love one another is the command of God, it is his revealed will, and is well pleasing in his sight; it comes from him, is a gift of his grace, and a fruit of his Spirit, and which he teaches regenerate ones to exercise:

and everyone that loveth ?God, as the Alexandrian copy reads, or Christ, and the saints, who seem to be particularly meant:

is born of God;?for love to the brethren is an evidence of regeneration; (See Gill on 1 John 3:14); and knoweth God;?he knows God in Christ, and therefore loves those who have the grace of God in them, and the image of Christ upon them; he knows the mind and will of God, being taught of God to love the brethren; and he knows the love of God, and has had an experience of the grace of God, which influences him to love the saints.

1 John 4:8

He that loveth not, knoweth not God. If a man loves not the children of God, those that are born of him, he does not know, so as to love God, the Father of them; for to pretend love to God, the begetter of them, whom he sees not, and not love those who are begotten by him, and are visible objects of respect, is a contradiction, and cannot be reconciled: see (1 John 4:20) . This clause is left out in the Ethiopic version, and is transposed in the Syriac version, which reads the text thus, “for God, is love, and whoever loveth not, knoweth not God”. By which reading, the following reason stands in close connection with (1 John 4:7) .

For God is love; he loves himself; there is an entire love between the three divine Persons, who are in the strictest, and in the most inconceivable and inexpressible manner affected to each other; their love is natural and essential: God loves all his creatures as such, nor does he hate any of them, as so considered; and he bears an everlasting, unchangeable, and invariable love to his elect in Christ Jesus; of which an instance is given in the following verses, and is a reason why the saints should love one another; that they might be like their heavenly Father, by whom they are begotten, and of whom they are born, and whose children they are; seeing he is love itself, and in his breast is nothing else but love. So the Shekinah is, by the Cabalistic Jews F20, called (hbha) , “love”.

1 John 4:9

In this was manifested the love of God towards us. The love of God here spoken of, and instanced in, is not his general love to all his creatures, which is shown in the make of them, and in the support of them in their beings, and in his providential care of them, and kindness to them; but his special love towards his elect, and which was before it was manifested; it was secretly in his heart from everlasting, and did not begin to be at the mission of Christ into the world, but was then in a most glaring manner manifested: there were several acts of it before, as the choice of them in Christ, the appointment of him to be their Saviour, and the covenant of grace made with him on their account; these were more secret and hidden; but now the love and kindness of God appeared, broke forth, and shone out in its glory; this is a most flagrant and notorious instance of it, in which it is exceedingly conspicuous; this is a most clear proof, a plain and full demonstration of it:

because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world; the sender is God the Father, who is distinguished from the Son that is sent; of which act of sending, (See Gill on Romans 8:3) and (See Gill on Galatians 4:4); and for him, who is that God against whom we have sinned, and is that lawgiver that is able to save, and to destroy, and of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, to send his Son to be the Saviour of sinful men is an amazing instance of love; and which appears the more manifest, when it is observed that it is “his only begotten Son” that is sent; of which (See Gill on John 1:14); and the place he was sent into is the world, where his people are, and where their sins are committed, he came to expiate; and where he was treated with great indignity and contempt, and suffered many things, and at last death itself: the end of his mission was,

that we might live through him; who were dead in Adam, dead in sin, and dead in law, and could not quicken themselves; nor obtain eternal life for themselves, by their performances. Christ came, being sent, that they might have life, and that more abundantly than Adam had in innocence, or man lost by the fall; and accordingly they were quickened together with him; when he was quickened, after he had been put to death, they were virtually and representatively quickened and justified in him; and in consequence of his death and resurrection from the dead, they are regenerated and made spiritually alive, and live unto righteousness; and through his righteousness wrought out for them, and imputed to them, they are in a legal sense alive unto God, and alive and comfortable in their own souls, living by faith

on Christ, and have a right and title to eternal life; and which they also have through him, and which is chiefly intended here; for the design is not only that they may live spiritually and comfortably here, but eternally hereafter.

1 John 4:10

Herein is love. The love of God, free love, love that cannot be matched: herein it is manifested, as before; this is a clear evidence of it, an undoubted proof, and puts it out of all question:

not that we loved God: the love of God is antecedent to the love of his people; it was when theirs was not; when they were without love to him, yea, enemies in their minds, by wicked works, and even enmity itself, and therefore was not procured by theirs; but on the contrary, their love to him is caused by his love to them; hence his love, and a continuance in it, do not depend on theirs; nor does it vary according to theirs; wherefore there is good reason to believe it will continue, and never be removed; and this shows the sovereignty and freeness of the love of God, and that it is surprising and matchless:

but that he loved us; that is, God; and so the Syriac version reads, "but that God himself loved us". The Vulgate Latin version adds, first, as in (1 John 4:19) ; the instance of this love follows:

and sent his Son [to be] the propitiation for our sins: this is a subordinate end to the other, mentioned in (1 John 4:9) ; for, in order that sinful men may possess everlasting life and happiness, it is necessary that their sins be expiated, or atonement be made for them, which is meant by Christ's being a propitiation for them; that the justice of God should be satisfied; that peace and righteousness, or love and justice, should be reconciled together; and kiss each other; and that all obstructions be removed out of the way of the enjoyment of life, which are brought in by sin; and that the wrath of God, which sin deserved, be averted or appeased, according to our sense apprehension of it; for otherwise the love of God people is from everlasting, and is

unchangeable, never alters, or never changes from love to wrath, or from wrath to love; nor is the love of God procured by the satisfaction and sacrifice of Christ, which are the effects of it; but hereby the way is laid open for the display of it, and the application of its effects, in a way consistent with the law and justice of God. This phrase is expressive of the great love of Christ to his people, and of his substitution in their room and stead; and so it is used among the Jews for a substitution in the room of others, (wtbha bwrl) , "to express the greatness of love" F21; (See Gill on Romans 3:25) and (See Gill on Romans 9:3).

1 John 4:11

Beloved, if God so loved us as to send his Son to be a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins, and to obtain eternal life for us through his sufferings and death: the apostle uses the same language his Lord and master did, (John 3:16) ; we ought also to love one another; for those who are the objects of God's love ought to be the objects of ours; and if God has loved our fellow

Christians and brethren to such a degree, as to send his Son to die for them, we ought to love them too; and if we are interested in the same love, the obligation is still the greater; and if God loved them with so great a love, when they did not love him, but were enemies to him, then surely we ought to love them now they are become the friends of God, and ours also; as God loved them freely, and when unlovely, and us likewise in the same manner, and under the same circumstances, then we ought to love, and continue to love the saints, though there may be something in their temper and conduct disagreeable: God is to be imitated in his love; and his love to us, which is unmerited and matchless, should influence and engage us to the love of the brethren, who have a far greater claim to our love than we can make to the love of God; and which indeed is none at all, but what he is pleased to give us.

1 John 4:12

No man hath seen God at any time. The same is said by the Evangelist John, (John 1:18); but here it is observed with a different view, and upon another account; there it signifies that no man has seen and looked into the counsels and designs of God, and been able to make a discovery and declaration of his mind and will, his love and grace, and which is there ascribed to the Son of God, (See Gill on John 1:18); but here the sense is, that whereas God is invisible in his nature, and incomprehensible in his being and perfections, so that there is no coming to him, and seeing of him, and conversing with him in a familiar way, and so not of loving him as he is in himself, and ought to be loved, as one friend sees, converses with, and loves another, and finds his love increased by sight and conversation; then we ought to love the saints and people of God, who are visible, may be seen, come at, and conversed with, see (1 John 4:20) ; for this clause stands among the arguments and reasons for brotherly love:

if we love one another God dwelleth in us;?not as he does in his Son, by union of nature; nor as in heaven, by the displays of his glory; nor as in the whole world, by his omnipresence and power; but by his Spirit, and the communications of his love, and by his gracious presence and communion, which he indulges the saints with; for such who love one another, as they appear to have the Spirit of God, of which that grace is a fruit, so they are by the Spirit built up a fit habitation for God, and by which Spirit he dwells in them; and such may expect the presence of God, for they who live in peace, the God of love and peace shall be with them:

and his love is perfected in us;?not that love of God, with which he loves his people; for that admits of no degrees, and is not more or less in itself, or in his heart; but is always invariably and unchangeably the same, and is full, complete, and perfect in his own breast, as it was from all eternity; and does not pass by degrees, or gradually rise from a love of benevolence to a love of complacency and delight, or increase as our love does to him and to one another, on which it has no dependence: nor is this love perfected in the saints in this life; that is to say, they have not perfect knowledge and enjoyment of it; nor have they all the effects of it bestowed upon them, and applied unto them; the perfection of it, in this sense, will be in heaven: but the love with which God is loved is here designed; and it is called his, because he is both the object and the author of it; and this is no effect as to degrees; yea, sometimes, instead of abounding and increasing, it goes back, it is left, and waxes cold; and it will not have

its completion till the saints come to heaven, and then it will be in its full perfection and glory, when faith and hope shall be no more: but the sense is, that this grace of love is sincere and hearty, and without dissimulation; it is unfeigned love; and it is in deed and in truth, and not in word and in tongue only; and this appears to be so, by the love which is shown to the brethren, the children of God; so that love to God in the saints is perfected by love to the brethren, just in such sense as faith is made perfect by works, (James 2:22) , that is, is made to appear to be genuine, right, and true.

1 John 4:13

Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us. That there is a communion between God and us, and a communication of his love and grace to us, and an exercise of grace upon him; for God dwells in his people by his Spirit and grace, and they dwell in him by the exercise of faith and love upon him: and this is known,

because he hath given us of his Spirit: not of the essence and nature of the Spirit, which is the same with the nature of the Father and of the Son, and is incommunicable; but either of the gifts of the Spirit, which are divided to every man as he pleases, and which being bestowed on men, and used by them, for the profit and advantage of the church of God, show that God is with them, and dwells among them of a truth; or of the graces of the Spirit, such as faith, hope, and love, which are each the gifts of God; and these being bestowed and exercised, are proofs of the mutual indwelling of God and his people; (See Gill on 1 John 3:24).

1 John 4:14

And we have seen, and do testify this seems to be particularly said of the apostles, who had a clear discerning of the love and grace of God, manifested in the mission of Christ into the world; for though no man had seen his nature and his person, yet they had seen his love, and the exceeding riches of his grace, which he had shown forth in Christ Jesus; and they had also seen Christ, God manifest in the flesh; they had seen his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father; they had seen him with their bodily eyes; they had seen his works and miracles; they had seen him dying and risen again from the dead, and go up to heaven; they were witnesses, and eyewitnesses of him, and bore a faithful testimony of him, and for him, and particularly set their seal to this truth,

that the Father sent the Son [to be] the Saviour of the world;?not of every individual person in it, for there are some that will go into everlasting punishment, and even a world that will be condemned; Christ is not in fact the Saviour of all the individuals of human nature, and therefore was not sent to be such; for if he was, the end of his mission is not fully answered; nor of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also, and who are chiefly intended by “the world”; (See Gill on 1 John 2:2); and even of all the elect of God, styled his people, his sheep, his friends, his church, and the sons of God; and it may be said of all that believe in him throughout the whole world, without any distinction of nation, age, sex, state, or condition: and Christ is the Saviour both of the souls and bodies of these, from all their sins, original and actual; from the

power of Satan, the bondage and curse of the law, and wrath to come, and he is the only, able, willing, and complete Saviour, and who saves with an everlasting salvation.

1 John 4:15

Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of Elohim, the only begotten of the Father; that he is not a mere man, as the Jews, and Ebion and Cerinthus said, but a divine person, equal with the Father; which contains all that relates to the dignity of his person, and his fitness for his office as a Saviour, and which was the test of faith in those times, and the grand article of belief: not that a bare assent to this had what followed annexed to it; for the devils believed and owned that Jesus was the Son of God; and so might, and did, unregenerate persons, as the centurion at the cross of Christ, who know nothing what communion with God is; but this confession is such as is attended with a believing in Christ from the heart unto righteousness, life, and salvation, and a cheerful obedience to his ordinances and commands, from a principle of love to him, and faith in him, things not to be found in devils and carnal men; see (Romans 10:9 Romans 10:10) .

God dwelleth in him, and he in God; (See Gill on 1 John 4:13); this should encourage to an open and hearty confession of Christ as the Son of God, and Saviour of sinners, and to a public profession of his name, and faith in him, and an holding it fast without wavering.

1 John 4:16

And we have known and believed or have a full assurance and knowledge of, and faith in, the love that God hath to us;?shown as in many instances, so more especially in sending his Son to be the propitiation for our sins, to be the Saviour of us, and that we might live through him.

God is love; (See Gill on 1 John 4:8): and he that dwelleth in love;?who dwells by faith upon the love of God as displayed in Christ, and abides in the exercise of love to God and to the saints:

dwelleth in God, and God in him; (See Gill on 1 John 4:13); the last clause, “and God in him”, is left out in the Syriac version.

1 John 4:17

Herein is our love made perfect or love with us; which some understand of the love of God towards his people, and which is shed abroad in them: this indeed removes all fear of an awful judgment, and renders that amiable and desirable; and such who are interested in it, shall stand in that day with intrepidity and boldness; and this sense may seem to be favored by the Syriac version, which reads, “his love with us”; and especially by the Vulgate Latin version, which renders it, “the love of God with us”; but it is best to understand it agreeably to the context, of our love to God, which is with and in our hearts; and which is made, or made to appear to be perfect, true, and genuine, by our love to the brethren; since the love of God to

us does not admit of degrees, nor does it, or the reality and sincerity of it, depend upon our love to the saints; (See Gill on 1 John 4:12);

that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; not of men's judgment, when brought before judges, governors, and kings, for the sake of Christ and the Gospel, and stand at their bar, where saints, who have true love to God and Christ and the brethren, have stood with great courage and intrepidity, and shown much boldness, and used great freedom of speech; nor of judgment in this life, which sometimes begins at the house of God, though the saints often have great boldness and presence of mind, and freedom of expression both to God and man in a day of affliction, as Job had; but of the future judgment, which, though it will be very awful and solemn, Christ the Judge will appear with great majesty and glory, and all men will stand before him, and the books will be opened, and the judgment will proceed with great strictness and justice, and will issue in the everlasting perdition of devils and wicked men, yet the saints will have boldness in it: while evil men and devils tremble at the thoughts of it now, they rejoice and are glad; they love it, look for it, long for it, and hasten to it; and will stand fearless, and without the least dread, while others will flee to the rocks, and into the holes of the earth; and they will use freedom of speech with Christ, as the word here signifies; they will sing his new song, and ascribe the glory of their salvation to him, and express their praises of him, and love to him, then and to all eternity: and this boldness the saints may be said to arrive at through a perfect, or sincere, and genuine love of the brethren; for by this they know they are born again, and are born to an inheritance incorruptible, which they have both a meetness for, and a right unto; and knowing hereby that they are passed from death to life, they justly conclude they shall not enter into condemnation, and therefore are not afraid of the awful judgment: hereby they know that their faith is right, and that therefore they are manifestly the children of God; and if children, then heirs, and so shall be saved, and have everlasting life:

because as he is, so are we in this world; which may be understood either of God, to whom the saints are like; for such who are born again, as those who love the brethren are, they are partakers of the divine nature, and bear a resemblance to God, even in this present state of things; and as it becomes them to be holy in all manner of conversation, as he is holy, and to be merciful to wicked men, as he is merciful, so to love the saints as he does, and to be kind, tenderhearted, and forgive one another, as he for Christ's sake has forgiven them; for as God is love, they should be all love likewise; or of Christ, see (1 John 3:3 1 John 3:7

1 John 4:18

There is no fear in love in the love of the brethren; where that is, there is no fear: so far as that prevails and gains ground, fear removes; not the filial fear of God, the new covenant grace of fear, which is the beginning of wisdom, and is consistent with faith, hope, love, and spiritual joy; but either the fear of men, which brings a snare: those that truly love Christ, his Gospel, and his people, they are not afraid of men; the spirit of power, love, and of a sound mind, is opposite to a spirit of fear, nor can they stand together; and such strength there is sometimes in brotherly love, that the saints are not afraid of death itself, but freely lay down their lives for one another; see (1 John 3:16) ; or it may be rather, that they are not afraid of the day of judgment, and of

hell and damnation; where hatred of the brethren has place, there is a fear and dread of these things, as were in Cain; but those that love the brethren, they know they are passed from death to life, and shall not enter into condemnation, and therefore are in no fear of any of these things:

but perfect love casteth out fear; when love to the brethren appears to be perfect, that is, genuine and sincere, and a man knows that from the bottom of his heart he sincerely loves the saints, he concludes from hence, as he may, the truth of his faith, which works in this way; and this frees him from the fears of men and devils, and of the future judgment and wrath to come. The Jews have a saying {w},

“worthy is his portion that rules over the place of fear, for lo, there is nothing that rules over the degree of “fear” but “love”.”

Because fear hath torment: it distresses a man, fills him with anguish, and makes him restless and uneasy, and keeps him in servitude; through the fear of men, of the devil, death, judgment, and hell, he is all his lifetime, or as long as this fear lasts, subject to bondage: or “fear has punishment”, as it may be rendered, and is by the Vulgate Latin version; it is a punishment itself to a man; and its being criminal deserves punishment, and is punishable; see (Revelation 21:8) ; he that feareth is not made perfect in love; or “by love”; that is, he that is possessed, and under the power of a servile fear of punishment, is one who is not, by the love to the brethren, made to appear to himself to be a sincere lover of God, and true believer in Christ; for was he, he would not be in fear of destruction and death, since whoever truly loves God, and believes in Christ, shall certainly be saved; though such persons, at times, may not be without their doubts and fears.

1 John 4:19

We love him, because he first loved us.?) Lest love to God, and so to one another, should be thought to be of ourselves, and too much be ascribed unto it, the apostle observes, that God’s love to us is prior to our love to him; his love is from everlasting, as well as to everlasting; for he loves his people as he does his Son, and he loved him before the foundation of the world; his choosing them in Christ as early, and blessing them then with all spiritual blessings, the covenant of grace made with Christ from all eternity, the gift of grace to them in him before the world began, and the promise of eternal life to them so soon, show the antiquity and priority of his love: his love shown in the mission and gift of his Son was before theirs, and when they had none to him; and his love in regeneration and conversion is previous to theirs, and is the cause of it; his grace in regeneration brings faith and love with it, and produces them in the heart; and his love shed abroad there is the moving cause of it, or what draws it first into act and exercise; and the larger the discoveries and applications of the love of God be, the more does love to him increase and abound; and nothing more animates and inflames our love to God, than the consideration of the earliness of his love to us, of its being before ours; which shows that it is free, sovereign, distinguishing, and unmerited. Some read the words as an exhortation, “let us love him”; and others as in the subjunctive mood, “we should love him”, because some copies

read, “we love God”, and so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and the Alexandrian copy, read, “because God first loved us”: and so some others.

1 John 4:20

If a man say I love God, and hateth his brother, than which profession nothing can be more contradictory, not black and white, or hot and cold in the same degree:

he is a liar;?it is not truth he speaks, it is a contradiction, and a thing impossible:

for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen;?his person, which might have drawn out his affection to him; and something valuable and worthy in him, which might have commanded respect; or his wants and distresses, which should have moved his pity and compassion:

how can he love God whom he hath not seen??it cannot be thought he should; the thing is not reasonable to suppose; it is not possible he should; (See Gill on 1 John 4:12).

1 John 4:21

And this commandment have we from him either “from God”, as the Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin version read; and that to love the brethren is a commandment of God, is clear from (1 John 3:23) ; or from Christ, for it is also a command of his, even his new commandment, which he has given, and his people have received from him:

that he who loveth God, love his brother also; see (John 13:34) (John 15:12 John 15:17) ; which is an argument persuading to attend to the one as well as to the other; for the same command that requires the one, requires the other: and he that transgresses it in one case, is a transgressor of it, as well as in the other.

21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.