

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 1:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS

This book is called by the Jews *Veelleh Shemoth*, from the first words with which it begins, and sometimes *Sepher Shemoth*, and sometimes only *Shemoth*. It is by the Septuagint called *Exodus*, from whom we have the name of *Exodus*, which signifies "a going out"; see [Lu 9:31](#), because it treats of the going of the children of Israel out of Egypt; and hence in the Alexandrian copy it is called the *Exodus of Egypt*; and so the Syriac version entitles it the second book of the law, called "the going out"; and to the same purpose the Arabic version. The Jews sometimes give it the name of *Nezikin*, as Buxtorf {a} observes out of the Masora on [Ge 24:8](#) because in it some account is given of losses, and the restitution of them. That this book is of divine inspiration, and to be reckoned in the canon of the sacred writings, is sufficiently evident to all that believe the New Testament; since there are so many quotations out of it there by Christ, and his apostles; particularly see [Mr 12:26](#) and that it was wrote by Moses is not to be doubted, but when is not certain; it must be after the setting up of the tabernacle in the wilderness; the greatest part of what is contained in it, he was an eye and ear witness of; it plainly points out the accomplishment of the promises and prophecies delivered to Abraham, that his posterity would be very numerous, that they would be afflicted in a land not theirs, and in the fourth generation come out of it with great substance. It treats of the afflictions of the Israelites in Egypt, after the death of Joseph, until their deliverance by Moses; of his birth, calling, and mission to Pharaoh, to demand of him to let the children of Israel go; of the ten plagues upon him and his people, for refusing to dismiss them; of the departure of Israel from Egypt, and the institution of the passover on that account; of their passage through the Red sea into the wilderness, and of the various exercises and afflictions, supplies and supports they met with there; of the giving of a body of laws unto them, moral, ceremonial, and judicial; and of the building of the tabernacle, and all things appertaining to it; and throughout the whole, as there is a figure and representation of the passage of the people of God out of spiritual Egypt, through the wilderness of this world, to the heavenly Canaan, and of various things they must meet with in their passage, so there are many types of Christ, his person, office, and grace, and of his church, his word, and ordinances, which are very edifying and instructing. The book contains a history of about one hundred and forty years, from the death of Joseph, to the erection of the tabernacle.

{a} Lexic. Talmud. col. 1325.

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 1

This chapter begins with an account of the names and number of the children of Israel that came into Egypt with Jacob, [Ex 1:1](#) and relates that increase of them after the death of Joseph, and the generation that went down to Egypt, [Ex 1:6](#) and what methods the Egyptians took to diminish them, but to no purpose, as by obliging to cruel bondage and hard service; and yet the more they were afflicted, the more they increased, [Ex 1:9](#) by ordering the midwives of the Hebrew women to slay every son they laid them of; but they fearing God, did not obey the order of the king of Egypt, which when he expostulated with them about, they excused, and so the people multiplied, [Ex 1:15](#) and lastly, by ordering every male child to be cast into the river, [Ex 1:22](#) and which is the leading step to the account of the birth of Moses, which follows in the next chapter.

Ver. 1. **Now these are the names of the children of Israel which came down into Egypt,**.... Of the twelve patriarchs, the sons of Jacob, who were heads of the twelve tribes, whose names are here given; since the historian is about to give an account of their coming out of Egypt, and that it might be observed how greatly they increased in it, and how exactly the promise to Abraham, of the multiplication of his seed, was fulfilled: or, "and these are the names" {b}, &c. this book being connected with the former by the copulative "and"; and when this was wrote, it is highly probable there was no division of the books made, but the history proceeded in one continued account:

every man and his household came with Jacob; into Egypt, all excepting Joseph, and along with them their families, wives, children, and servants; though wives and servants are not reckoned into the number of the seventy, only such as came out of Jacob's loins: the Targum of Jonathan is,

"a man with the men of his house,"

as if only male children were meant, the sons of Jacob and his grandsons; and Aben Ezra observes, that women were never reckoned in Scripture as of the household or family; but certainly Dinah, and Serah, as they came into Egypt with Jacob, are reckoned among the seventy that came with him thither, [Ge 46:15](#).

{b} hlaw "et haec", Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius.

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Ver. 2. **Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah.** The first sons of Jacob by Leah.

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Ver. 3. **Issachar, Zebulun,**.... The other two sons of Jacob, by Leah:

Benjamin; the youngest of all Jacob's sons is placed here, being his son by his beloved wife Rachel. Joseph is not put into the account, because he did not go into Egypt with Jacob.

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Ver. 4. **Dan, and Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.** Who are last mentioned, being sons of the concubine wives.

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Ver. 5. **And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls,**.... "Souls" are put for persons; of the number seventy, and how reckoned, See Gill on "Ge 46:27". This was but a small number that went down to Egypt, when compared with that which went out of it; and that it should be compared with it is the design of its being mentioned, see [Ex 12:37](#):

for Joseph was in Egypt already; and is the reason why he is not reckoned among the sons of Jacob, that came thither with him; though rather it may be better rendered, "with Joseph who was in Egypt" {c}; for he must be reckoned, and indeed his two sons also, to make up the number seventy; therefore Jonathan rightly supplies it,

"with Joseph and his sons who were in Egypt,"

See Gill on "Ge 46:27".

{c} Poyw "cum Josepho qui erat in Aegypto", Junius & Tremellius, Ainsworth, Noldius, No. 1197. p. 273. so the Arabic version, Kimchi, and Ben Melech.

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Ver. 6. **And Joseph died, and all his brethren,**.... It is a notion of the Jews, that Joseph died before any of his brethren,

See Gill on "Ge 50:26" and they gather it from these words; but it does not necessarily follow from hence, they might die some before him and some after him; and as they were all born in about seven years' time, excepting Benjamin, they might all die within a little time of each other: according to the Jewish writers {d}, the dates of their death were these,

"Reuben lived one hundred and twenty four years, and died two years after Joseph; Simeon lived one hundred and twenty years, and died the year after Joseph; Levi lived one hundred and thirty seven years, and died twenty four years after Joseph; Judah lived one hundred and nineteen years, Issachar one hundred and twenty two, Zebulun one hundred and twenty four, and died two years after Joseph; Dan lived one hundred and twenty seven years, Asher one hundred and twenty three years, Benjamin one hundred and eleven years, and died twenty six years before Levi; Gad lived one hundred and twenty five years, and Naphtali one hundred and thirty three years;"

but though this account of the Jews, of their times, and of the times of their death, is not to be depended upon, yet it is certain they all died in Egypt, though they were not buried there; but as Stephen says, [Ac 7:16](#) they were carried over to Shechem and interred there, either quickly after their decease, or, however, were taken along with the bones of Joseph by the children of Israel, when they departed out of Egypt: and it is also evident that they all died before the affliction and oppression of the children of Israel in Egypt began; and this account seems to be given on purpose to point this out unto us, being placed in the order it is. Levi lived the longest of them all, and the affliction did not begin till after his death; and the Jewish chronologers say {e} that from his death to the children of Israel's going out of Egypt were one hundred and sixteen years; and they further observe {f}, that it could not last more than one hundred and sixteen years, and not less than eighty seven, according to the years of Miriam:

and all that generation; in which Joseph and his brethren had lived. These also died, Egyptians as well as Israelites, before the oppression began.

{d} R. Bechai apud Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 3. 2. & 4. 1. {e} R. Gedaliah in Shalshalet, fol. 5. 1. Ganz. Tzemach David: par. 1. fol. 6. 1. {f} Seder Olam Rabba, c. 3. p. 9.

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Ver. 7. **And the children of Israel were fruitful**,.... In their offspring; became like fruitful trees, as the word signifies:

and increased abundantly; like creeping things, or rather like fishes, which increase very much, see [Ge 1:20](#)

and multiplied; became very numerous, whereby the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were fulfilled:

and waxed exceeding mighty; were hale, and strong, of good constitutions, able bodied men, and so more dreaded by the Egyptians: a heap of words is here used to express the vast increase of the people of Israel in Egypt:

and the land was filled with them; not the whole land of Egypt, but the land of Goshen: at first they were seated in a village in that country, but now they were spread throughout the towns and cities in it.

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Ver. 8. **Now there arose up a new king over Egypt**,.... Stephen calls him another king, [Ac 7:18](#) one of another family, according to Josephus {g}; who was not of the seed royal, as Aben Ezra; and Sir John Marsham {h} thinks this was Salatis, who, according to Manetho {i}, was the first of the Hyysi or pastor kings that ruled in lower Egypt; but these kings seem to have reigned before that time, See Gill on "Ge 46:34" and Bishop Usher {k} takes this king to be one of the ancient royal family, whose name was Ramesses Miamun; and gives us a succession of the Egyptian kings from the time of Joseph's going into Egypt to this king: the name of that Pharaoh that reigned when Joseph was had into Egypt, and whose dreams he interpreted, was Mephramuthosis; after him reigned Thmosis, Amenophis, and Orus; and in the reign of the last of these Joseph died, and after Orus reigned Acenehres a daughter of his, then Rathotis a brother of Acenchres, after him Acencheres a son of Rathotis, then another Acencheres, after him Armais, then Ramesses, who was succeeded by Ramesses Miamun, here called the new king, because, as the Jews {l} say, new decrees were made in his time; and this Pharaoh, under whom Moses was born, they call Talma {m}, and with Artapanus {n} his name is Palmanotheres:

which knew not Joseph; which is not to be understood of ignorance of his person, whom he could not know; nor of the history of him, and of the benefits done by him to the Egyptian nation, though, no doubt, this was among their records, and which, one would think, he could not but know; or rather, he had no regard to the memory of

Joseph; and so to his family and kindred, the whole people of Israel: he acknowledged not the favours of Joseph to his nation, ungratefully neglected them, and showed no respect to his posterity, and those in connection with him, on his account; though, if a stranger, it is not to be wondered at.

{g} Antiqu. l. 2. c. 9. sect. 1. {h} Canon. Chron. Sec. 8. p. 107. {i} Apud Joseph. Contr. Apion. l. 1. sect. 14. {k} Annal. Vet. Test. p. 17. 18. {l} T. Bab. Erubin. fol. 53. 1. {m} Juchasin, fol. 135. 2. {n} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 431.

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Ver. 9. **And he said unto his people,**.... His princes, nobles, and courtiers about him, his principal ministers of state:

behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: which could not be true in fact, but is said to stir up his nobles to attend to what he was about to say, and to work upon them to take some speedy measures for the crushing of this people; for that they were more in number, and mightier in power and wealth than the Egyptians, it was impossible; and indeed it may seem strange, that the king should tell such an untruth, which might be so easily contradicted by his courtiers; though the words will bear to be otherwise rendered, as that "the children of Israel are many" {o}; as they were very greatly multiplied, and became very numerous; and they might be "mightier", that is, more robust and strong, and fitter for war than the Egyptians, and therefore, were formidable, and a people to be guarded against; and it was high time to think of securing themselves from them, before they grew too mighty and powerful; or they might be more numerous and mighty in that part of the land in which they were, in Goshen, though not more and mightier than the Egyptians in general.

{o} br "multus", Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius, Rivet.

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Ver. 10. **Come on,**.... Which is a word of exhortation, stirring up to a quick dispatch of business, without delay, the case requiring haste, and some speedy and a matter of indifference:

let us deal wisely with them; form some wise schemes, take some crafty methods to weaken and diminish them gradually; not with open force of arms, but in a more

private and secret manner, and less observed:

lest they multiply; yet more and more, so that in time it may be a very difficult thing to keep them under, and many disadvantages to the kingdom may arise from them, next observed:

and it come to pass, that when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies; their neighbours the Arabians, and Phoenicians, and Ethiopians: with the latter the Egyptians had wars, as they had in the times of Moses, as Josephus {p} relates, and Artapanus {q}, an Heathen writer, also: Sir John Marsham {r} thinks these enemies were the old Egyptians, with whom the Israelites had lived long in a friendly manner, and so more likely to join with them, the Thebans who lived in upper Egypt, and between whom and the pastor kings that reigned in lower Egypt there were frequent wars; but these had been expelled from Egypt some time ago:

and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land; take the opportunity, by joining their enemies and fighting against them, to get away from them out of Egypt into the land of Canaan, from whence they came: this, it seems, the Egyptians had some notion of, that they were meditating something of this kind, often speaking of the land of Canaan being theirs, and that they should in a short time inherit it; and though they were dreaded by the Egyptians, they did not care to part with them, being an industrious laborious people, and from whom the kingdom reaped many advantages.

{p} Antiqu. l. 2. c. 10. {q} Ut supra. (Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 431.) {r} Canon Chron. See 8. p. 107.

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Ver. 11. Therefore they did set taskmasters over them, to afflict them with their burdens,.... This was the first scheme proposed and agreed on, and was carried into execution, to appoint taskmasters over them; or "princes", or "masters of tribute" {r}, commissioners of taxes, who had power to lay heavy taxes upon them, and oblige them to pay them, which were very burdensome, and so afflictive to their minds, and tended to diminish their wealth and riches, and obliged them to harder labour in order to pay them, and so every way contributed to distress them:

and they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses; these might be built with the money they collected from them by way of tribute, and so said to be built by them, since it was chiefly in husbandry, and in keeping flocks and herds, that the

Israelites were employed; or they might be concerned in building these cities, some of them understanding architecture, or however the poorer or meaner sort might be made use of in the more laborious and servile part of the work; those two cities are, in the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, called Tanis and Pelusium; but Tanis was the same with Zoan, and that was built but seven years after Hebron, an ancient city, in being long before this time, see [Nu 13:22](#). Pelusium indeed may be one of them, but then it is not that which is here called Raamses, but Pithom, as Sir John Marsham {s} and others think: Pithom is by Junius thought to be the same with the Pathumus of Herodotus {t}, a town in Arabia Petraes, upon the borders of Egypt, where a ditch was dug from the Nile to the Red sea, and supposed to be the work of the Israelites: Raamses is a place different from Ramesses, [Ge 47:11](#) and had its name from the then reigning Pharaoh, Ramesses Miamun, as Pithom is thought by some to be so called from his queen: Pliny {u} makes mention of some people called Ramisi and Patami, who probably were the inhabitants of these cities, whom he joins to the Arabians as bordering on Egypt: the Septuagint version adds a third city, "On", which is Heliopolis: and a learned writer {w} is of opinion that Raamses and Heliopolis are the same, and observes, that Raamses, in the Egyptian tongue, signifies the field of the sun, being consecrated to it, as Heliopolis is the city of the sun, the same with Bethshemesh, the house of the sun, [Jer 43:13](#) and he thinks these cities were not properly built by the Israelites, but repaired, ornamented, and fortified, being by them banked up against the force of the Nile, that the granaries might be safe from it, as Strabo {x} writes, particularly of Heliopolis; and the Septuagint version here calls them fortified cities; and with this agrees what Benjamin of Tudela says {y}, that he came to the fountain of "Al-shemesh", or the sun, which is Raamses; and there are remains of the building of our fathers (the Jew says) even towers built of bricks, and Fium, he says {z}, (which was in Goshen, See Gill on "Ge 47:11") is the same with Pithom; and there, he says, are to be seen some of the buildings of our fathers. Here these cities are said to be built for treasure cities, either to lay up the riches of the kings of Egypt in, or as granaries and storehouses for corn, or magazines for warlike stores, or for all of these: some think the "pyramids" were built by the Israelites, and there is a passage in Herodotus {a} which seems to favour it; he says, the kings that built them, the Egyptians, through hatred, name them not, but call them the pyramids of the shepherd Philitis, who at that time kept sheep in those parts; which seems to point at the Israelites, the beloved people of God, who were shepherds.

{r} Myom yrv "principes tributorum", Pagninus, Montanus, Fagius, Drusius, Cartwright; so Tigurine version. {s} Ut supra. (Canon Chron. Sec. 8. p. 107.) {t} Euterpe, sive, l. 2. c. 158. {u} Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 28. {w} Jablonski de Terra Goshen, dissert. 4. sect. 8. {x} Geograph. l. 17. p. 553. {y} Itinerar. p. 120. {z} Ib. p. 114. {a} Ut supra, ({t}) c. 128.

[Exodus 1:12](#)

Ver. 12. **But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew**,.... Became more numerous, "and broke out" {b}, as it may be rendered, like water which breaks out and spreads itself; so the Israelites, increasing in number, spread themselves still more in the land; the Egyptians thought, by putting them to hard labour in building cities, to have weakened their strength, and made them unfit for the procreation of children; but instead of that, the more hard labour they were put unto, the more healthful and the stronger they were, and begot more children, and multiplied exceedingly: and so it is that oftentimes afflictive dispensations are multiplying and growing times to the people of God, in a spiritual sense; who grow like the palm tree, which the more weight it has upon it the more it grows; when the church of God has been most violently persecuted, the number of converts have been greater, and saints under affliction grow in grace, in faith and love, in holiness, humility, patience, peace, and joy; see

[Ac 12:1](#)

and they were grieved because of the children of Israel; because of their multiplication and increase, and because their schemes for lessening them did not succeed; they were as thorns in their eyes, as some interpret the word, as Jarchi {c} observes.

{b} Uppy "erumpebat", Junius & Tremellius, Drusius, Tigurine version. {c} Krbp "in fractione", Cajetan. apud Rivet.

[Exodus 1:13](#)

Ver. 13. **And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour**. Or with breach {c}, with what might tend to break their strength; they laid heavier burdens upon them, obliged them to harder service, used them more cruelly and with greater fierceness, adding to their hard service ill words, and perhaps blows.

{c} Krbp "in fractione", Cajetan. apud Rivet.

[Exodus 1:14](#)

Ver. 14. **And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage**,.... So that they had no ease of body nor peace of mind; they had no comfort of life, their lives and mercies were embittered to them:

in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service of the field; if Pelusium was one of the cities they built, that had its name from clay, the soil about it being clayish, and where the Israelites might be employed in making brick for the building of that and other cities: Josephus {d} says, they were ordered to part the river (Nile) into many canals, to build walls about cities, and raise up mounds, lest the water overflowing the banks should stagnate; and to build pyramids, obliging them to learn various arts, and inure themselves to labour: so Philo the Jew says {e}, some worked in the clay, forming it into bricks, and others in carrying straw: some were appointed to build private houses, others the walls of cities, and to cut ditches and canals in the river, and obliged day and night to carry burdens, so that they had no rest, nor were they suffered to refresh themselves with sleep; and some say that they were not only employed in the fields in ploughing and sowing and the like, but in carrying of dung thither, and all manner of uncleanness: of their being employed in building of pyramids and canals, See Gill on "Ge 47:11"

all their service wherein they made them serve was with rigour; they not only put them to hard work, but used them in a very churlish and barbarous manner, abusing them with their tongues, and beating them with their hands: Philo in the above place says, the king not only compelled them to servile works, but commanded them heavier things than they could bear, heaping labours one upon another; and if any, through weakness, withdrew himself, it was judged a capital crime, and the most merciless and cruel were set over them as taskmasters.

{d} Antiqu. l. 2. c. 9. sect. 1. {e} De Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 608.

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Ver. 15. **And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives,**.... It is difficult to say who these midwives were, whether Egyptian or Hebrew women. Josephus is of opinion that they were Egyptians, and indeed those the king was most likely to succeed with; and it may seem improbable that he should offer such a thing to Hebrew women, who he could never think would ever comply with it, through promises or threatenings; and the answer they afterwards gave him, that the Hebrew women were not as the Egyptian women, looks as if they were of the latter: and yet, after all, it is more likely that these midwives were Hebrew women, their names are Hebrew; and besides, they are not said to be the midwives of Hebrew women, but Hebrew midwives; nor does it seem probable that the Hebrew women should have Egyptian midwives, and not those of their own nation; and they were such as feared the Lord; and the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem are express for it, and they pretend to tell

us who they were: "of which the name of the one was Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah"; the one, they say, was Jochebed, the wife of Amram, and mother of Moses and Aaron, and the other Miriam their sister; and this is the sense of many of the Jewish writers {f}: but whatever may be said for Jochebed, it is not credible that Miriam should be a midwife, who was but a girl, or maid, at this time, about seven years of age, as the following chapter shows, and much less one of so much repute as to be spoke to by the king. It may seem strange, that only two should be spoke to on this account, when, as Aben Ezra supposes, there might be five hundred of them: to which it may be answered, that these were the most noted in their profession, and the king began with these, that if he could succeed with them, he would go on to prevail on others, or engage them to use their interest with others to do the like; or these might be the midwives of the principal ladies among the Israelites, in one of whose families, according as his magicians had told, as the Targum of Jonathan observes, should be born a son, by whom the land of Egypt would be destroyed; of which Josephus {g} also takes notice; and therefore he might be chiefly solicitous to destroy the male children of such families; but Aben Ezra thinks, that these two were the chief over the rest of the midwives, and who collected and paid to the king the tribute out of their salaries, which was laid upon them, and so he had an opportunity of conversing with them on this subject.

{f} T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 11. 2. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 74. 1. Jarchi in loc. {g} Ut supra. (Antiq. l. 2. c. 9. sect. 1.)

[Exodus 1:16](#)

Ver. 16. **And he said, when ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women,....**
Deliver them of their children:

and see [them] upon the stools; seats for women in labour to sit upon, and so contrived, that the midwives might do their office the more readily; but while they sat there, and before the birth, they could not tell whether the child was a son or a daughter; wherefore Kimchi {h} thinks the word here used signifies the place to which the infant falls down from its mother's belly, at the time of labour, and is called the place of the breaking forth of children, and takes it to be the "uterus" itself; and says it is called "Abanim", because "Banim", the children, are there, and supposes "A" or "Aleph" to be an additional letter; and so the sense then is, not when ye see the women on the seats, but the children in the place of coming forth; but then he asks, if it be so, why does he say, "and see them" there? could they see them before they were entirely out of the womb? to which he answers, they know by this rule, if a son, its face was downwards, and if a daughter, its face was upwards; how true this is, must

be left to those that know better; the Jewish masters {i} constantly and positively affirm it: he further observes, that the word is of the dual number, because of the two valves of the womb, through which the infant passes:

if it be a son, then ye shall kill him; give it a private pinch as it comes forth, while under their hands, that its death might seem to be owing to the difficulty of its birth, or to something that happened in it. This was ordered, because what the king had to fear from the Israelites was only from the males, and they only could multiply their people; and because of the above information of his magicians, if there is any truth in that:

but if it be a daughter, then she shall live, be kept alive, and preserved, and brought up to woman's estate; and this the king chose to have done, having nothing to fear from them, being of the feeble sex, and that they might serve to gratify the lust of the Egyptians, who might be fond of Hebrew women, being more beautiful than theirs; or that they might be married and incorporated into Egyptian families, there being no males of their own, if this scheme took place, to match with them, and so by degrees the whole Israelitish nation would be mixed with, and swallowed up in the Egyptian nation, which was what was aimed at.

{h} Sepher Shorash. rad. Nba. {i} T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 11. 1. Niddah, fol. 31. 2.

Exodus 1:17

Ver. 17. **But the midwives feared God**,.... And therefore durst not take away the life of an human creature, which was contrary to the express law of God, [Ge 9:6](#):

and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them; knowing it was right to obey God rather than man, though ever so great, or in so exalted a station:

but saved the men children alive; did not use any violence with them, by stifling them in the birth. The scheme was so barbarous and shocking, especially to the tender sex, to whom it was proposed, and so devoid of humanity, that one would think it should never enter into the heart of man.

Exodus 1:18

Ver. 18. **And the king called for the midwives**,.... Perceiving, by the increase of the Israelites, that they did not obey his commands:

and said unto them, why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive? not only did not kill them, but did everything for them that was necessary for their future preservation and health; see

[Eze 16:4](#). Exodus 1:19 Ver. 19. And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women,.... Not so tender, weak, and feeble, nor so ignorant of midwifery, and needed not the assistance of midwives, as the Egyptian women: for they [are] lively; or midwives themselves, as Kimchi {k} says the word signifies; and so {l} Symmachus translates the words, "for they are midwives"; or are skilful in the art of midwifery, as Jarchi interprets it; and so the, Vulgate Latin version is, "for they have knowledge of midwifery"; and so could help themselves; or, "for they are as beasts" {m}, as animals which need not, nor have the assistance of any in bringing forth their young; and so Jarchi observes, that their Rabbins {n} explain it, they are like to the beasts of the field, who have no need of a midwife; or they were so lively, hale, and strong, as our version, and others, and their infants also, through a more than common blessing of God upon them at this time, that they brought forth children as soon as they were in travail, with scarce any pain or trouble, without the help of others: nor need this seem strange, if what is reported is true, of women in Illyria, Ireland, Italy {o}, and other places {p}, where it is said women will go aside from their work, or from the table, and bring forth their offspring, and return to their business or meal again; and especially in the eastern and hotter countries, women generally bring forth without much difficulty, and without the use of a midwife {q}: and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them; which doubtless was true in some cases, though not in all, because it is before said, they saved the men children alive; and had it been so at all times, there would have been no proof and evidence of their fearing God, and obeying his commands, rather than the king's; and in some cases not only the strength and liveliness of the Hebrew women, and their fears also, occasioned by the orders of the king, might hasten their births before the midwives could get to them; and they might not choose to send for them, but use their own judgment, and the help of their neighbours, and do without them, knowing what the midwives were charged to do. {k} Sepher Shorash. hyx "sie alii", hnh twyx yk "quia obstetrices ipsae", Pagninus, Montanus; so the Syriac version. {l} maiai gar eisi, Symmachus apud Drusium. {m} In T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 11. 1. Chronicon Mosis, fol. 2. 1. {n} Vid Wagenseil. Sotah, p. 249. & Varro & Gataker in ib. {o} Posidonius apud Strabo. Geograph. l. 3. p. 114. {p} See Harte's History of the Life of Gustavus Adolphus, vol. 1. p. 233. {q} Ludolph. Ethiopic. l. 1. c. 14. Exodus 1:20 Ver. 20. Wherefore God dealt well with the midwives,.... He approved of their conduct upon the whole, however difficult it may be to clear them from all blame in this matter; though some think that what they said was the truth, though they might not tell all the truth; yea, that they made a glorious confession of their faith in God, and plainly told the king, that it was nothing but the immediate hand of God that the

Hebrew women were so lively and strong, and therefore were resolved not to oppose it, let him command what he would; so Dr. Lightfoot {r}, who takes the midwives to be Egyptians: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty; became very numerous, and strong, and robust, being the offspring of such lively women. {r} Works, vol. 1. p. 700. Exodus 1:21 Ver. 21. And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God,.... And regarded his command, and not that of the king, though they risked his displeasure, and their lives: that he made them houses; which some understand of the Israelites making houses for them, being moved to it by the Lord, to preserve them from the insults of the Egyptians; others of Pharaoh building houses for them, in which he kept them, until the Hebrew women came to their time of delivery, who were ordered to be brought to these houses, that it might be known by others, as well as the midwives, whether they brought forth sons or daughters, neither of which is likely: but rather the sense is, that God made them houses, and hid them from Pharaoh, as Kimchi interprets it, that he might not hurt them, just as he hid Jeremiah and Baruch: though it seems best of all to understand it of his building up the families of these midwives, increasing their number, especially their substance and wealth, making them and their households prosperous in all worldly good; but because the word is in the masculine gender, some choose to interpret it either of the infants themselves, the male children the midwives preserved, and of their being built up families in Israel, or by means of whom they were built up; or of the Israelites themselves, whose houses were built up by their means: and others are of opinion that material houses or buildings are meant, built for the Israelites, that the midwives might know where to find them and their wives, when ready to lie in, who before lived up and down in fields and tents: but the sense of God's building up the families of the midwives is to be preferred, there being an enallage or change of the gender, which is not unusual; see Ex 15:21. Exodus 1:22 Ver. 22. And Pharaoh charged all his people,.... Finding he could not carry his point with the midwives, he gave a general order to all his people everywhere: saying, every son that is born ye shall cast into the river; the river Nile; not every son born in his kingdom, for this would have ruined it in time; but that was born to the Jews, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan; and it is added in the Septuagint version, to the Hebrews: and every daughter ye shall save alive; for the reasons given See Gill on "Ex 1:16".

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 2:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 2

This chapter relates the birth of Moses, and his preservation in an ark of bulrushes, [Ex 2:1](#). His being found by Pharaoh's daughter, took up, and put out to nurse by her, and adopted for her son, [Ex 2:4](#), some exploits of his when grown up, taking the part of an Hebrew against an Egyptian whom he slew, and endeavouring to reconcile two Hebrews at variance, when one of them reproached him with slaying the Egyptian, [Ex 2:11](#), which thing being known to Pharaoh, he sought to slay Moses, and this obliged him to flee to Midian, [Ex 2:15](#) where he met with the daughters of Reuel, and defended them against the shepherds, and watered their flocks for them, [Ex 2:16](#), which Reuel being informed of, sent for him, and he lived with him, and married his daughter Zipporah, by whom he had a son, [Ex 2:18](#) and the chapter is concluded with the death of the king of Egypt, and the sore bondage of the Israelites, and their cries and groans, which God had a respect unto, [Ex 2:23](#).

Ver. 1. **And there went a man of the house of Levi**,.... This man was Amram, the son of Kohath, and grandson of Levi, as appears from [Ex 6:18](#)

and took to wife a daughter of Levi; one of the same house, family, or tribe; which was proper, that the tribes might be kept distinct: this was Jochebed, said to be his father's sister, See Gill on "Ex 6:20": her name in Josephus {s} is Joachebel, which seems to be no other than a corruption of Jochebed, but in the Targum in [1Ch 4:18](#) she is called Jehuditha.

{s} Antiqu. l. 2. c. 9. sect. 4.

[Exodus 2:2](#)

Ver. 2. **And the woman conceived, and bare a son**,.... Which was not her first child, nor indeed her first son, for she had both Aaron and Miriam before this: this son, which was Moses, was born, as the Jews say {t}, in the thirty seventh year after the death of Levi, A. M. 2365, (or, as others, 2368,) on a Wednesday, the seventh of the month Adar, in the third hour of the day: some say it was on the twenty fourth of Nisan; but, according to Bishop Usher {u}, he was born forty one years after the death of Levi, A. M. 2433, and in the year before Christ 1571,

and when she saw him that he was a goodly child; exceeding fair and beautiful, as Stephen expresses it, [Ac 7:20](#), the Jews say {w} his form was like an angel of God, and Trogus {x}, an Heathen writer, says his beautiful form recommended him: this engaged the affections of his parents to him, and who, from hence, might promise themselves that he would be a very eminent and useful person, could his life be preserved:

she hid him three months; in her bedchamber, some Jewish writers say {y}; others {z}, in a house under ground, that is, in the cellar; however, it was in his father's house, [Ac 7:20](#).

{t} Shatshalet Hakabala, fol. 5. 2. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 7. 1. {u} Annal. Vet. Test. p. 18. {w} Pirke Eliezer, c. 48. fol. 57. 2. {x} Justin e Trogo, l. 36. c. 2. {y} Chronicon Mosis, fol. 3. 2. {z} Pirke Eliezer, ut supra. (c.48. fol. 57.2)

Exodus 2:3

Ver. 3. And when she could no longer hide him,.... Because of her neighbours, who might hear the crying of the child, or because of the diligent search made by Pharaoh's officers, which some think was made every three months: the Jews {a} have a notion that his mother was delivered of him at six months' end, and therefore when the other three months were up women usually go with child, she could hide him no longer, a birth of a child being then expected, and would be inquired about:

she took for him an ark of bulrushes; the word, according to Kimchi {b}, signifies a kind of wood exceeding light, so Gersom and Ben Melech; an Arabic writer {c} calls it an ark of wood; it is generally taken to be the "papyrus" or reed of Egypt, which grew upon the banks of the Nile, and of which, many writers say, small vessels or little ships were made, See Gill on "Isa 18:2"

and daubed it with slime and with pitch; with pitch without and slime within, as Jarchi observes; which being of a glutinous nature, made the rushes or reeds stick close together, and so kept out the water:

and put the child therein; committing it to the care and providence of God, hoping and believing that by some means or another it would be preserved; for this, no doubt, was done in faith, as was the hiding him three months, to which the apostle ascribes that, [Heb 11:23](#)

and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink; among the sedge, weeds, and rushes,

that grew upon the banks of the river Nile; there she laid it, that it might not be carried away with the stream of the river, and that it might be seen and taken up by somebody that would have compassion on it, and take care of it: the Arabic writers {d} say, that Jochebed made an ark of the papyrus, though in the law it is said to be of cork, and pitched within and without, and put the child into it, and laid it on the bank of the Nile, where the water was not so deep, by the city Tzan (or Zoan, that is, Tanis), which was the metropolis of the Tanitic nome; but very wrongly adds, that it might be killed by the dashing of the waves, and she might not see its death.

{a} Targum Jon. & Jarchi in loc. {b} Sepher Shorash. rad. amg. {c} Elmacius apud Hottinger. p. 402. {d} Patricides, p. 25. Elmacinus, p. 46. apud Hottinger. Smegma, c. 8. p. 400.

[Exodus 2:4](#)

Ver. 4. **And his sister stood afar off**,.... This was Miriam, as the Targum of Jonathan expresses it; who is supposed to be about ten or twelve years of age, others say seven: she was placed {e}, as the word may be rendered, by her parents, or, "she placed herself" {f}, by their instruction, at some distance from the place where the ark was, that she might not be observed and be thought to belong to it, and yet so near as to observe what became of it, which was the intent of her standing there, as follows:

to wit what would be done to him; to know, take notice, and observe, what should happen to it, if anyone took it up, and what they did with it, and where they carried it, for, "to wit" is an old English word, which signifies "to know", and is the sense of the Hebrew word to which it answers, see [2Co 8:1](#).

{e} butt "collocata fuerat", Vatablus. {f} "Stiterat sese", Junius & Tremellius, "stitit sese", Piscator, Drusius.

[Exodus 2:5](#)

Ver. 5. **And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river**,.... Her name, in Josephus {g}, is called Thermuthis, and by Artapanus {h}, an Heathen writer, Merrhis, perhaps from Miriam, and frequently by the Jewish writers {i}, Bithia, which is the name of a daughter of another Pharaoh, [1Ch 4:18](#) from whence they seem to have taken it: she came down from the palace of her father, the gardens of which might lead to the Nile; for Zoan or Tanis, near to which, the Arabiac writers say, as before observed, the ark was laid, was situated on the banks of the river Nile,

and was the royal seat of the kings of Egypt; though perhaps the royal seat at this time was either Heliopolis, as Apion testifies {k}, that it was a tradition of the Egyptians that Moses was an Heliopolitan, or else Memphis, which was not far from it; for Artapanus, another Heathen writer, says {l}, that when he fled, after he had killed the Egyptian, from Memphis, he passed over the Nile to go into Arabia: however, no doubt a bath was there provided for the use of the royal family; for it can hardly be thought that she should go down and wash herself in the open river: here she came to wash either on a religious account, or for pleasure: the Jews {m} say it was an extraordinary hot season throughout Egypt, so that the flesh of men was burnt with the heat of the sun, and therefore to cool her she came to the river to bathe in it: others {n} of them say, that they were smitten with burning ulcers, and she also, that she could not wash in hot water, but came to the river:

and her maidens walked along by the river's side; while she washed herself; though it is highly probable she was not left alone: these seem to be the maids of honour, there might be others that might attend her of a meaner rank, and more fit to do for her what was necessary; yet these saw not the ark, it lying lower among the flags, and being nearer the bath where Pharaoh's daughter was, she spied it from thence as follows:

and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it; the maid that waited on her while the rest were taking their walks; her she sent from the bath among the flags to take up the ark: the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, and R. Eliezer {o}, render it,

"she stretched out her arm and hand, and took it;"

the same word, being differently pointed, so signifying; but this is disapproved of, by the Jewish commentators.

{g} Antiqu. l. 2. c. 9. sect. 5. {h} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 432.

{i} T. Bab. Megillah, fol. 13. 1. Derech Eretz, fol. 19. 1. Pirke Eliezer, c. 48.

Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 5. 2. {k} Apud Joseph. Contr. Apion, l. 2. sect. 2. {l} Apud

Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 433. {m} Chronicon Mosis, fol. 3. 2. Ed.

Gaulmin. {n} Targum Jon. in loc. Pirke Eliezer, ut supra. (c.48. fol. 57.2.) {o} Ibid.

Vid. T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 12. 1.

Exodus 2:6

Ver. 6. And when she had opened it,.... The ark, for it was shut or covered over, though doubtless there were some apertures for respiration:

she saw the child [in it], and, behold, the babe wept; and which was a circumstance, it is highly probable, greatly affected the king's daughter, and moved her compassion to it; though an Arabic writer says {p}, she heard the crying of the child in the ark, and therefore sent for it:

and she had compassion on him, and said, this is one of the Hebrews' children; which she might conclude from its being thus exposed, knowing her father's edict, and partly from the form and beauty of it, Hebrew children not being swarthy and tawny as Egyptian ones: the Jewish writers {q} say, she knew it by its being circumcised, the Egyptians not yet using circumcision.

{p} Patricides apud Hottinger. p 401. {q} T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 12. 2. Aben Ezra in loc.

Exodus 2:7

Ver. 7. Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter,.... Miriam the sister of Moses, who observing the ark taken up, and the maidens that were walking upon the bank of the river, and other women perhaps, gathering about it to see it; she made one among them, and after hearing their discourse about it, proposed what follows to Pharaoh's daughter: Jarchi says, that Pharaoh's daughter tried several Egyptian women to suckle it, but it would not suck of them: Josephus {r} says the same, and it also is in the Talmud {s}; and that, if true, gave Miriam a fair opportunity to offer to do the following message for her:

shall I go and call for thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee? for she perceived that she was desirous of having the child brought up as her own.

{r} Antiqu. l. 2. c. 9. sect. 5. {s} T. Bab. Sotah, ut supra. (fol. 12.1)

Exodus 2:8

Ver. 8. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, go,.... She fell in at once with the proposal, being, no doubt, overruled, by the providence of God, to agree to have such a person called:

and the maid went and called the child's mother; and her own, whose name was Jochebed the wife of Amram, as observed in [Ex 2:1](#).

Exodus 2:9

Ver. 9. **And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her,**.... Being come, having made all possible haste:

take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages; by which means she had not only the nursing of her own child, but was paid for it: according to a Jewish writer {t}, Pharaoh's daughter agreed with her for two pieces of silver a day.

{t} Dibre Hayamim; sive Chronicon Mosis, fol. 4. 1.

Exodus 2:10

Ver. 10. **And the child grew,**.... In stature and in strength, thriving under the care of its mother and nurse, through the blessing of God:

and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter; when grown up and weaned, and needed a nurse no longer: a Jewish chronologer {u} says, this was two years after his birth; and another says {w}, that when he was three years old, Pharaoh sitting at table, and his queen was at his right hand, and his daughter, with Moses, at his left, and his mother before him, when Moses in the sight of them all took the crown from Pharaoh's head:

and he became her son; by adoption, for though she was a married woman, as some say, yet had no children, though very desirous of them, which accounts the more for her readiness in taking notice and care of Moses; so Philo the Jew says {x}, that she had been married a long time, but never with child, though she was very desirous of children, and especially a son, that might succeed her father in the kingdom, or otherwise it must go into another family: yea, he further says, that she feigned herself with child, that Moses might be thought to be her own son: and Artapanus {y}, an Heathen writer, says that the daughter of Pharaoh was married to one Chenephres, who reigned over the country above Memphis, for at that time many reigned in Egypt; and she being barren, took a son of one of the Jews, whom she called Moyses, and being grown up to a man's estate, was, by the Greeks, called Musaeus:

and she called his name Moses, and she said, because I drew him out of the water; by which it appears, that this word is derived from the Hebrew word hvm, "Mashah", which signifies to draw out, and is only used of drawing out of water, [2Sa 22:17](#)

which Pharaoh's daughter gave him, he being an Hebrew child, and which language she may very well be thought to understand; since there were such a large number of Hebrews dwelt in Egypt, and she was particularly conversant with Jochebed her Hebrew nurse; and besides, there was a great affinity between the Hebrew and the Egyptian language, and therefore there is no need to derive the word from the latter, as Philo {z} and Josephus {a} do; who observe that "Mo" in the Egyptian language signifies "water", and "Yses", "saved"; besides, the Egyptian name of Moses, according to Aben Ezra, who had it from a book of agriculture in that language, is Momos: the Jewish writers {b} give to Moses many names, which he had from different persons, no less than ten: and Artapanus {c} says, that by the Egyptian priests he was called Hermes or Mercury, and probably was the Hermes of that people; he is called by Orpheus {d} udogenhv, "born in water", because drawn out of it.

{u} Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 5. 2. {w} Chronicon. ib. Shalshal. ib. {x} De Vita Mosis, c. 1. p. 604, 605. {y} Apud Euseb, Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 432. {z} Ut supra. ({x}) {a} Ut supra, (Antiqu. l. 2. c. 9.) sect. 6. {b} Vajikra Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 146. 3. Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 5. 2. Chronicon Mosis, fol. 4. 1. {c} Apud Euseb. ut supra. (praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 432.) {d} De Deo, v. 23.

[Exodus 2:11](#)

Ver. 11. **And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown,**.... To man's estate; some of the Jewish writers say he was eighteen, others twenty years of age {e}, but Stephen, who is most to be credited, says he was full forty years of age, [Ac 7:23](#),

that he went out unto his brethren the Hebrews: whom he knew to be his brethren, either by divine revelation, or by conversing with his nurse, who was his mother; who, doubtless, instructed him while he was with her, as far as he was capable of being informed of things, and who might frequently visit her afterwards, by which means he became apprised that he was an Hebrew and not an Egyptian, though he went for the son of Pharaoh's daughter, which he refused to be called when he knew his parentage, [Heb 11:24](#) now he went out from Pharaoh's palace, which in a short time he entirely relinquished, to visit his brethren, and converse with them, and understood their case and circumstances:

and looked on their burdens; which they were obliged to carry, and were very heavy, and with which they were pressed; he looked at them with grief and concern, and considered in his mind how to relieve them, if possible:

and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren; the Egyptian was, according to Jarchi, a principal of the taskmasters of Israel, who was beating the Hebrew for not doing his work as he required, and the Hebrew, according to him, was the husband of Shelomith, daughter of Dibri, [Le 24:11](#), though others say it was Dathan {f}.

{e} Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 5. 2. {f} Ibid.

Exodus 2:12

Ver. 12. And he looked this way, and that way,.... All around, to observe if there were any within sight who could see what he did; which did not arise from any consciousness of any evil he was about to commit, but for his own preservation, lest if seen he should be accused to Pharaoh, and suffer for it:

and when he saw that there was no man; near at hand, that could see what he did, and be a witness against him:

he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand; in a sandy desert place hard by, where having slain him with his sword, he dug a hole, and put him into it; See Gill on "Ac 7:24". Of the slaughter of the Egyptian, and the following controversy about it, Demetrius {g}, an Heathen writer, treats of in perfect agreement with the sacred Scriptures.

{g} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 19. p. 439.

Exodus 2:13

Ver. 13. And when he went out the second day,.... The day following:

behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together; which the Jewish writers {h} take to be Dathan and Abiram:

and he said to him that did the wrong; who was the aggressor, and acted the wicked part in abusing his brother:

wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? friend and companion; signifying, that it was very unbecoming, unkind, and unnatural, and that brethren and friends ought to live together in love, and not strive with, and smite one another, and especially at such a

time as this, when they were so oppressed by, and suffered so much from their enemies;
See Gill on "Ac 7:26".

{h} Targum Jon. & Jarchi in loc. Shemoth Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 91. 4. Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 5. 2. Pirke Eliezer, c. 48.

[Exodus 2:14](#)

Ver. 14. **And he said, who made thee a prince and a judge over us?....** God had designed him for one, and so he appeared to be afterwards; but this man's meaning is, that he was not appointed by Pharaoh's order then, and so had nothing to do to interfere in their differences and quarrels; though Moses did not take upon him to act in an authoritative way, but to exhort and persuade them to peace and love, as they were brethren:

intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? if this was Dathan, or however the same Hebrew that he had defended and rescued from the Egyptian, it was very ungenerous in him to upbraid him with it; or if that Hebrew had made him his confident, and acquainted him with that affair, as it was unfaithful to betray it, since it was in favour of one of his own people, it was ungrateful to reproach him with it:

and Moses feared; lest the thing should be discovered and be told to Pharaoh, and he should suffer for it: this fear that possessed Moses was before he fled from Egypt, and went to Midian, not when he forsook it, and never returned more, at the departure of the children of Israel, to which the apostle refers, [Heb 11:27](#) and is no contradiction to this:

and said, surely this thing is known; he said this within himself, he concluded from this speech, that either somebody had seen him commit the fact he was not aware of, or the Hebrew, whose part he took, had through weakness told it to another, from whom this man had it, or to himself; for by this it seems that he was not the same Hebrew, on whose account Moses had slain the Egyptian, for then the thing would have been still a secret between them as before; only the other Hebrew this was now contending with must hereby come to the knowledge of it, and so Moses might fear, that getting into more hands it would come out, as it did; See Gill on "Ac 7:27".
See Gill on "Ac 7:28".
See Gill on "Ac 7:29".

[Exodus 2:15](#)

Ver. 15. **Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses,**.... Both for his killing the Egyptian, which by the laws of Egypt {i} was death, whether bond or free; and for his taking part with the Hebrews against the Egyptians, and knowing him to be a wise and valiant man, might fear he would put himself at the head of the Hebrews, and cause a revolt of them; and if there was anything in his dream, or if he had such an one, and had the interpretation of it given by his magicians, that an Hebrew child should be born, by whom Egypt would be destroyed, See Gill on "Ex 1:15", he might call it to mind, and be affected with it, and fear the time was coming on, and Moses was the person by whom it should be done; and he might be stirred up by his courtiers to take this step, who doubtless envied the growing interest of Moses in his court:

but Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh; not through want of courage, but through prudence, to avoid danger, and preserve his life for future usefulness; and no doubt under a divine impulse, and by the direction of divine Providence, the time for him to be the deliverer of Israel not being yet come:

and dwelt in the land of Midian: a country so called from Midian, one of Abraham's sons by Keturah, [Ge 25:2](#). Jerom {k} calls it a city, and says it was on the other side of Arabia, to the south, in the desert of the Saracens, to the east of the Red sea, from whence the country was called Midian; and Philo {l} says, that Moses went into neighbouring Arabia; and which is confirmed by Artapanus {m} the Heathen historian, who says, that from Memphis, crossing the river Nile, he went into Arabia; and this country was sometimes called Cush or Ethiopia; hence Moses's wife is called an Ethiopian woman,

[Nu 12:1](#)

and he sat down by a well; weary, thoughtful, and pensive. It may be observed, that it was usual with persons in such like circumstances, being strangers and not knowing well to whom to apply for assistance or direction, to place themselves at a well of water, to which there was frequent resort, both for the use of families and of flocks; see [Ge 24:11](#). This well is now called, as some say, Eyoum el Kaseb, fourteen hours and a half from Magare Chouaib, or "the grot of Jethro" {n}; but if this was so far from Jethro's house, his daughters had a long way to go with their flock: but some other travellers {o} speak of a very neat and pleasant village, called Hattin, where they were shown the grave of Jethro, Moses's father-in-law; and in the neighbourhood of that place is a cistern, now called Omar, and is said to be the watering place where Moses met with the daughters of the priest of Midian. A late learned man {p} thinks, that Sharma, which is about a day and a half's journey southeast from Mount Sinai, is the place where Jethro lived. The Arabic geographer {q} says, at the shore of the Red

sea lies the city Madian, greater than Tabuc, and in it is a well, out of which Moses watered the flocks of Scioaib, that is, Raguel. {i} Diodor. Sicul. Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 70. {k} De locis Heb. fol. 93. A. B. {l} De Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 609. {m} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 433. {n} See a Journey from Grand Cairo to Mecca, in Ray's Travels, vol. 2. p. 468. {o} Egmont and Heyman's Travels, vol. 2. p. 29. {p} See the Origin of Hieroglyphics, at the end of a Journal from Cairo, to Mount Sinai, p. 55. Ed. 2. {q} Climat. 3. par. 5. Exodus 2:16Ver. 16. Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters,.... Who being a descendant of Abraham might have retained the knowledge of the true God, and might be a priest of his, as Melchizedek was, or otherwise it may be thought improbable that Moses would have married his daughter, as he afterwards did; and so Aben Ezra says, he was a priest of God; though the word is sometimes used of a prince, ruler, and governor; and is so rendered here by the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan; and Artapanus {r}, an Heathen writer, expressly calls him arcwn, a "prince" of those places, that is, of Arabia; he might be both prince and priest, as Melchizedek before mentioned was, and as has been the usage of many countries:and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock; which is no contradiction to their being daughters either of a priest or a prince, which were both high titles and characters; since it was usual in those early times, and in those countries, for the sons and daughters of considerable persons to be employed in such services; See Gill on "Ge 29:9". {r} Ut supra, (Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27.) p. 434. Exodus 2:17Ver. 17. And the shepherds came and drove them away,.... The daughters of the priest of Midian, and their flock likewise; these were shepherds of some neighbouring princes or great men, who were so rude and slothful, and to save themselves a little trouble of drawing water, brought up their flocks to drink of the water those virgins had drawn, and to do this forced them and their flocks away:but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock; moved to see such rude and uncivil treatment of the weaker sex, rose up from the ground on which he sat, and took their parts, and obliged the shepherds to give way, and brought up their flock to the troughs, and drew water for them, and gave them it; either he did this alone, or together with the servants that waited upon the priest's daughters, perhaps alone; and if it be considered that shepherds being usually not of a very martial spirit, and these also in a wrong cause, and Moses a man of an heroic disposition, and had doubtless the appearance of a man of some eminence and authority, they were the more easily intimidated and overcome. Exodus 2:18Ver. 18. And when they came to Reuel their father,.... Or Ragouel, as the Septuagint; and so Artapanus {s} calls him. The Targum of Jonathan has it, their father's father; and so Aben Ezra says he was; and is the sense of others, induced thereto by Nu 10:29, but it does not follow from thence: he said,how is it that you are come so soon today? it being not only sooner than they were wont to come, but perhaps their business was done in so short a time; that it was marvellous to him that it could be done in it, so quick a dispatch had Moses made, and they through his assistance; and especially it might be more strange, if it

was usual, as it seems it was, to be molested by the shepherds. {s} Ut supra. (Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 434.) Exodus 2:19 Ver. 19. And they said, an Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds,.... A man, who by his habit and by his speech appeared to them to be an Egyptian, and upon their inquiry he might tell them so, being born in Egypt, though of Hebrew parents: and also drew water enough for us; or "in drawing drew" {t}; drew it readily, quickly and in abundance: and watered the flock; by which means their business was done, and they returned home earlier than usual. {t} hld hld "hauriendo bausit", Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator. Exodus 2:20 Ver. 20. And he said unto his daughters, and where is he?.... By the account Reuel's daughters gave of Moses, of his courage and humanity, he was very desirous of seeing him: why [is it] that ye have left the man? behind them at the well, and had not brought him along with them; he seemed to be displeased, and chides them, and tacitly suggests that they were rude and ungrateful not to ask a stranger, and one that had been so kind to them, to come with them and refresh himself: call him, that he may eat bread; take meat with them, bread being put for all provisions. Exodus 2:21 Ver. 21. And Moses was content to dwell with the man,.... After he had been called and brought into the house, and had had some refreshment, and after some conversation had passed between them, and perhaps after some days' stay in Reuel's house; Reuel having observed his disposition and behaviour, and being delighted therewith, proposed to him to take up his residence with him, with which motion Moses was well pleased, and accepted of it: and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter; to be his wife. It is not to be supposed that this was done directly; though both Philo {u} and Josephus {w} intimate as if it was done at first meeting together; but it is not likely that Reuel would dispose of his daughter so suddenly to a stranger, though he might at once entertain an high opinion of him; nor would Moses marry a woman directly he had so slender an acquaintance with, so little knowledge of her disposition, endowments of mind and religion. The Targum of Jonathan says it was at the end of ten years; and indeed forty years after this a son of his seems to have been young, having not till then been circumcised, Ex 4:22. The author of the Life of Moses says {x}, that he was seventy seven years of age when he married Zipporah, which was but three years before he returned to Egypt. This circumstance of Moses's marrying Reuel's daughter is confirmed by Artapanus {y} an Heathen historian; and also by Demetrius {z}, and expressly calls her Sapphira, who he says was a daughter of Jother or Jethro; and likewise by Ezekiel the tragedian {a}. {u} De Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 611. {w} Antiqu. l. 2. c. 11. sect. 2. {x} Chronicon Mosis, fol. 9. 1. {y} Apud Euseb. Evangel. Praepar. l. 9. c. 27. p. 434. {z} Ib. c. 29. p. 439. {a} Ib. c. 28. Exodus 2:22 Ver. 22. And she bare him a son, and he called his name Gershom,.... Which signifies a "desolate stranger"; partly on his own account, he being in a foreign country, a stranger and sojourner; but not by way of complaint, but rather of thankfulness to God for providing so well for him in it; and partly on his son's account, that when he came to years of maturity and knowledge, he might learn, and

in which Moses no doubt instructed him, that he was not to look upon Midian as his proper country, but that he was to be heir of the land of Canaan, and which he might be reminded of by his name: for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land; so Midian was to him, who was born in Egypt, and being an Hebrew, was entitled to the land of Canaan; this looks as if he had been at this time some years in Midian. Exodus 2:23 Ver. 23. And it came to pass in process of time that the king of Egypt died,.... According to Eusebius, Orus reigned in Egypt when Moses fled from thence, and that two more reigned after him, Acenchres and Achoris, who both died before the deliverance of the children of Israel; but according to Bishop Usher {b}, this was the same king of Egypt under whom Moses was born, and from whose face he fled, who died in the sixty seventh year of his reign, Moses being now sixty years of age, and having been in the land of Midian twenty years; and it was about twenty years after this that he was called from hence, to be the deliverer of his people; for things are often put close together in Scripture, which were done at a considerable distance. And the intention of this notice of the death of the king of Egypt is chiefly to show that it made no alteration in the afflictions of the children of Israel for the better, but rather the worse: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage; the severity of it, and its long duration, and seeing no way for their escape out of it: and they cried, and their cry came up unto God; they not only sighed and groaned inwardly, but so great was their oppression, that they could not forbear crying out aloud; and such was the greatness and vehemency of their cry, that it reached up to heaven, and came into the ears of the Almighty, as vehement cries are said to do, whether sinful or religious; see Ge 18:20 by reason of the bondage; which may either be connected with their "cry", that that was because of their bondage; or with the "coming" of it unto God, he was pleased to admit and regard their cry, because their bondage was so very oppressive and intolerable. {b} Annal Vet. Test. p. 19. A. M. 2494. Exodus 2:24 Ver. 24. And God heard their groaning,.... The petitions they put up to him with groans and cries: and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob; that he would bring their seed out of a land not theirs, in which they were strangers, and were afflicted, into the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession. Exodus 2:25 Ver. 25. And God looked upon the children of Israel,.... With an eye of pity and compassion, and saw all the hardships they laboured under, and all the injuries that were done unto them: and God had respect unto [them]; had a favourable regard to them; or "knew" {b} not only them, the Israelites, and loved them, and approved of them, and owned them as his own, all which words of knowledge sometimes signify; but he knew their sorrows and sufferings, and took notice of what was done to them secretly; see Ex 3:7. {b} edyw "et eognovit", Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 3:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 2

In this chapter we are informed how that the Lord appeared to Moses in a bush on fire, but not consumed, [Ex 3:1](#), declared unto him that he had seen and observed the afflictions of the children of Israel, and was determined to deliver them, [Ex 3:7](#), that he gave him a call to be the deliverer of them, answered his objections to it, and instructed him what he should say, both to the elders of Israel and to Pharaoh, [Ex 3:10](#), and assured him, that though at first Pharaoh would refuse to let them go, yet after many miracles wrought, he would be willing to dismiss them, when they should depart with great substance, [Ex 3:19](#).

Ver. 1. **Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian,**.... Who was either the same with Reuel or Raguel, spoken of in the preceding chapter; or, as others think, a son of his, the father being now dead; seeing it was now forty years since Moses came into Midian, [Ac 7:30](#). Demetrius {c}, an Heathen writer, expressly says that Jothor a son of Raguel, and Zipporah or Sephora, as he calls her, was his daughter, whom Moses married: now this was the business Moses was chiefly concerned in during his stay in Midian; keeping the sheep of his father-in-law, in which great personages have have employed, and who have afterwards been called to the kingly office, as David; and this was an emblem of his feeding and ruling the people of Israel, and in it he was an eminent type of Christ, the great shepherd and bishop of souls: no doubt there were other things besides this in which Moses exercised himself in this course of time, and improved himself in the knowledge of things, natural, civil, and religious, and which the more qualified him for the important work he was designed for: it is thought that in this interval he wrote the book of Genesis, and also the book of Job:

and he led the flock to the backside of the desert; of Sinai or Arabia, on the back part of which, it seems, were goodly pastures; and hither he led his flock to feed, which was about three days' journey from Egypt, [Ex 5:3](#) or rather into the desert {d}, for Horeb or Sinai was not behind the desert, but in it:

and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb; so called either because of the appearance of God at this time, after related, or because of his giving the law and making the covenant with the people of Israel there; and it should be observed that that transaction was past when Moses wrote this book. Hither he led the sheep, they delighting in mountains, hence sometimes mountainous places are called

oiopola, {e}, because sheep delight to feed upon them {f}.

{c} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 29. p. 439. {d} rbdmh rxa upo thn eremon, Sept. "in desertum", Syr. Samar, so Noldius, p. 11. No. 76. {e} Homer. Odys. 11. prope finem. {f} En ouresi mala nomeuwn, Theocrit. Idyll. 3.

Exodus 3:2

Ver. 2. **And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him,**.... Not a created angel, but the Angel of God's presence and covenant, the eternal Word and Son of God; since he is afterwards expressly called Jehovah, and calls himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which a created angel would never do: the appearance was,

in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush; not in a tall, lofty, spreading oak or cedar, but in a low thorny bramble bush, which it might have been thought would have been consumed in an instant of time:

and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush [was] not consumed; this was not imaginary, but a real thing; there was

such a bush, and Jehovah appeared in it in this manner, and though it was all on fire yet was not consumed, but remained entire after it: reference is frequently had to it as a matter of fact, [De 33:16](#). Artapanus {g}, an Heathen writer, had got some hint of it; his account is this, that while Moses was praying to God, and entreating the afflictions of his people might cease, he was propitious to him, and on a sudden fire broke out of the earth and burned, when there was no matter nor anything of a woody sort in the place: nor need this account Moses gives be thought incredible, when so many things similar to it are affirmed by Heathen writers, who speak of a whole forest in flames without fire, and of a spear that burned for two hours, and yet nothing of it consumed; and of a servant's coat all on fire, and yet after it was extinguished no trace or mark of the flames were to be seen on it; and several other things of the like kind are related by Huetius {h} out of various authors: as to the mystical signification of this bush, some make it to be a type of Christ, and of his manifestation in the flesh; of the union of the two natures in him, and of their distinction of the glory of the one, and of the meanness of the other; of his sustaining the wrath of God, and remaining fearless and unhurt by it; and of his delivering and preserving his people from it: the Jews commonly interpret it of the people of Israel, in the furnace of affliction in Egypt, and yet not consumed; nay, the more they were afflicted the more they grew; and it may be a symbol of the church and people of God, in all ages, under affliction and distress: they are like to a thorn bush both for their small quantity, being few, and for their

quality, in themselves weak and strengthless, mean and low; have about them the thorns of corruptions and temptations, and who are often in the fire of afflictions and persecutions, yet are not consumed; which is owing to the person, presence, power, and grace of Christ being among them;
See Gill on "Ac 7:30".

{g} Apud Euseb. ib. c. 27. p. 434. {h} Alnetan. Quaest. l. 2. c. 12. sect. 10. p. 193, 194.

Exodus 3:3

Ver. 3. **And Moses said, I will now turn aside**,.... From the place where he was, and the flock he was feeding, and get nearer to the bush, which seems to have been on one side of him and not directly before him:

and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt; inquire into, and find out, if he could, the reason of this strange and amazing sight; how it could be that a bush should be on fire and yet not burnt up, which might have been expected would have been destroyed at once; for what is a thorn or bramble bush to devouring flames of fire, as these appeared to be?

Exodus 3:4

Ver. 4. **And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see**,.... Who is before called the Angel of the Lord, here Jehovah, the omniscient and omnipresent Being, who observing Moses turning aside and going onward to gratify his curiosity, by examining more narrowly this strange phenomenon:

God called unto him out of the midst of the bush; with an articulate voice, being the eternal Word:

and said, Moses, Moses; for the Lord knows his people distinctly, and can call them by name; and the repetition of his name not only shows familiarity and a strong vehement affection for him, but haste to stop him, that he might proceed no further; and this was done in order to stir him up to hearken to what would be said to him:

and he said, here am I; ready to hear what shall be said, and to obey whatever is commanded.

Exodus 3:5

Ver. 5. **And he said, draw not nigh hither**,.... Keep a proper distance:

put off thy shoes from off thy feet; dust and dirt cleaving to shoes, and these being ordered to be put off from the feet, the instrument of walking, show that those that draw nigh to God, and are worshippers of him, ought to be of pure and holy lives and conversations:

for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground; not that there was any inherent holiness in this spot of ground more than in any other, which ground is not capable of; but a relative holiness on account of the presence of God here at this time, and was not permanent, only while a pure and holy God was there: hence, in after times, the temple being the place of the divine residence, the priests there performed their services barefooted, nor might a common person enter into the temple with his shoes on {k}; and to this day the Jews go to their synagogues barefooted on the day of atonement {l}, to which Juvenal {m} seems to have respect; and from hence came the Nudipedalia among the Heathens, and that known symbol of Pythagoras {n}, "sacrifice and worship with naked feet": in this manner the priests of Diana sacrificed to her among the Cretians and other people {o}; and so the priests of Hercules did the same {p}; the Brahmans among the Indians never go into their temples without plucking off their shoes {q}; so the Ethiopian Christians, imitating Jews and Gentiles, never go into their places of public worship but with naked feet {r}, and the same superstition the Turks and Mahometans observe {s}.

{k} Misn. Beracot, c. 9. sect. 5. {l} Buxtorf. Jud Synagog. c. 30. p. 571. {m} "Observant ub. festa mero pede Sabbata reges." Satyr. 6. {n} Jamblichus de Vita Pythagor. Symbol. 3. {o} Solin. Polyhistor. c. 16. Strabo, l. 12. p. 370. {p} Silius de Bello Punic, l. 3. {q} Rogerius de Relig. Brachman. l. 2. c. 10. apud Braunium de vest. sacerdot. l. 1. c. 3. p. 66. {r} Damianus a Goes apud Rivet. in loc. {s} Pitts's Account of the Relig. and Manners of the Mahometans, c. 6. p. 38. 81. Georgieviz. de Turc. Moribus, c. 1. p. 11. Sionita de Urb. Oriental. & Relig. c. 7. p. 18. c. 10. p. 34.

Exodus 3:6

Ver. 6. **Moreover he said, I am the God of thy fathers**,.... Of every one of his fathers next mentioned:

the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; with whom the

covenant respecting the land of Canaan, and the promise of the blessed seed the Messiah, was made: this again shows that the Angel of the Lord that now appeared was God himself, Jehovah the Son of God. Our Lord makes use of this text to prove the resurrection of the dead against the Sadducees, God being not the God of the dead, but of the living; [Mr 12:26](#)

and Moses hid his face; wrapped it in his mantle or cloak, as Elijah did, [1Ki 19:13](#), because of the glory of the divine Majesty now present, and conscious of his own sinfulness and unworthiness:

for he was afraid to look upon God; even upon this outward appearance and representation of him in a flame of fire; otherwise the essence of God is not to be looked upon and seen at all, God is invisible; but even this external token and symbol of him was terrible to behold; the thought that God was there filled him with fear, considering the greatness and awfulness of his majesty, and what a poor, weak, and sinful creature he was.

[Exodus 3:7](#)

Ver. 7. And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt,.... Or, "in seeing I have seen", which not only denotes the certainty of it, as we express it; but the clear, distinct, and full sight he had of it, with sympathy towards them, an affectionate concern for them, and a fixed, settled, determination in his mind to deliver them; he had long took notice of, and had thoroughly observed their affliction, and was afflicted with them in it, and was bent upon their deliverance out of it:

and have heard their cry, by reason of their taskmasters; who were set over them to see that they did their work, and to lay heavy burdens on them, and afflict them by all manner of ways and methods they could devise; and who abused and beat them for not doing what was not to be done, which made them cry out because of their barbarous usage of them, and cry unto God for help and deliverance:

for I know their sorrows; the pains of body they were put unto, and the inward grief and trouble of their minds on account of them.

[Exodus 3:8](#)

Ver. 8. And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians,....

Which must be understood consistent with the omnipresence of God, who is everywhere, and strictly speaking cannot be said to remove from place to place, or to descend; but such a way of speaking is used, when he gives some eminent display of his power or goodness, as here in a wonderful manner he appeared in a burning bush, and manifested himself in a way of grace and kindness to his people, signifying that he would shortly save them: so Christ in our nature came down from heaven to earth, to save his spiritual Israel out of the hands of all their enemies:

and to bring them out of that land; the land of Egypt, where they were in bondage, and greatly oppressed:

unto a good land, and a large; the land of Canaan, which was not only a good land, but a large one in comparison of Goshen, where the Israelites were pent up and straitened for room through their great increase; and though it was but a small country in itself, and when compared with some others, being but one hundred and sixty miles from Dan to Beersheba, and but forty six from Joppa to Bethlehem, and but sixty from Joppa to Jordan, yet, for so small a country, it had a great deal of good land in it; for Hecataeus {t} an Heathen writer, says it had in it three hundred myriads of acres of the best and most fruitful land:

unto a land flowing with milk and honey; which is not to be restrained merely to the abundance of cattle fed here, and the plenty of milk they produced, or the number of bees that swarmed here, and the quantity of honey they made; for the land abounded with other good things, and excellent fruits, as corn, and wine, and oil, and with figs, pomegranates, palm trees, &c. but this is a proverbial and hyperbolical expression, setting forth the great affluence of all sorts of good things in it, for the necessity and delight of human life:

unto the place of the Canaanites; who are mentioned first, as being the general name for the inhabitants of the land, as Aben Ezra suggests, though they are often spoken of as a distinct nation or tribe from the rest, and a principal one, denominated from Canaan the son of Ham:

and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites: the Hittites and Amorites had their names from Heth and Emor, sons of Canaan; the Perizzites, Aben Ezra says, are the same with Sidon, who was the firstborn of Canaan: and the Hivites and Jebusites were the descendants also of sons of Canaan,

[Ge 15:19](#), the Girgashites are not here mentioned, either because they were a lesser people than the rest, as Aben Ezra thinks; or their land was not a land flowing with milk and honey, as Abendana observes; or they were gone out of the land before Israel

went into it, according to other Jewish writers, or immediately yielded to Joshua, without fighting against him.

{t} Apud Joseph. contr. Apion. l. 1. c. 22.

Exodus 3:9

Ver. 9. **Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me,....**
See [Ex 2:23](#):

and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them; which is repeated to observe the great notice he took of it; and the reason of his descent and appearance in this wonderful manner, as well as of the urgent necessity of Moses's going to deliver the people from their oppression.

Exodus 3:10

Ver. 10. **Come now therefore,.....** Leave thy flock, thy family, and the land of Midian:

and I will send thee unto Pharaoh: this Pharaoh, according to Eusebius, was Cenchres, the successor of Achoris; but according to Bishop Usher {u}, his name was Amenophis, who immediately succeeded Ramesses Miamun, under whom Moses was born. Clemens of Alexandria {w} relates from Apion, and he, from Ptolemy Mendesius, that it was in the times of Amosis that Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt; but Tacitus {x} says, the name of this king was Bocchoris, who obliged them to go out, being advised by an oracle to do so; and so says Lysimachus {y}:

that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt; and conduct them through the wilderness to the land of Canaan, and so be their deliverer, guide, and governor under God, who now gave him a commission to act for him.

{u} Annal. Vet. Test. p. 19. {w} Stromat. l. 1. p. 320. {x} Hist. l. 5. c. 3. {y} Apud Joseph. contr. Apion, l. 1. c. 34.

Exodus 3:11

Ver. 11. **And Moses said unto God, who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh,....** A private person, an exile in a foreign country, a poor shepherd, unknown to Pharaoh,

and had no interest in him; and he a great king, and possessed of numerous forces to defend his country, and prevent the Israelites' departure out of it: time was when he was known to a Pharaoh, dwelt in his court, and made a figure there, and had great interest and authority there, being the adopted son of the king's daughter; but now it was otherwise with him:

and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt: who though a people numerous, yet unarmed, and held in great bondage; and he might remember how he had been repulsed and rejected by some of them forty years ago, which might be discouraging to him.

Exodus 3:12

Ver. 12. And he said, certainly I will be with thee,.... To encourage and strengthen him; to protect, defend, and preserve him, and to succeed and prosper him; to give him credit and respect with the people of Israel, and influence over Pharaoh to prevail upon him at length to let Israel go:

and this shall be a token unto thee that I have sent thee; not the promise now made, nor the vision he had seen, but what follows:

when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain: Mount Horeb or Sinai, as they did at the time of the giving of the law on it, when an altar was built upon a hill, and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, [Ex 24:4](#) and this was a sign, "a posteriori", confirming the divine mission of Moses; and besides the promise of this, on which Moses might depend, being made by the Lord, assured him of success, that he should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt, since he and they would serve the Lord together at this mountain, and from whence he might conclude he had a mission and commission from God. Of a like kind is the sign or token given of the deliverance of Jerusalem from the army of Sennacherib, [Isa 37:30](#).

Exodus 3:13

Ver. 13. And Moses said unto God,.... Having received full satisfaction to his objection, taken from his own unfitness for such a service, and willing to have his way quite clear unto him, and his commission appear firm and valid to his people, he proceeds to observe another difficulty that might possibly arise:

when I come unto the children of Israel: out of Midian into Egypt;

and shall say unto them, the God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; with a message to them to receive him as his ambassador and their deliverer:

and they shall say unto me, what is his name? a question it was probable they would ask, not through ignorance, since in their distress they had called upon the name of the Lord, and cried unto him for help and deliverance; but either to try Moses, and what knowledge he had of God: or there being many names by which he had made himself known; and especially was wont to make use of a new name or title when he made a new appearance, or any eminent discovery of himself, they might be desirous of knowing what was the present name he took:

what shall I say unto them? what name shall I make mention of?

Exodus 3:14

Ver. 14. **And God said unto Moses, I am that I am,**.... This signifies the real being of God, his self-existence, and that he is the Being of beings; as also it denotes his eternity and immutability, and his constancy and faithfulness in fulfilling his promises, for it includes all time, past, present, and to come; and the sense is, not only I am what I am at present, but I am what I have been, and I am what I shall be, and shall be what I am. The Platonists and Pythagoreans seem to have borrowed their to on from hence, which expresses with them the eternal and invariable Being; and so the Septuagint version here is
o wn: it is said {z}, that the temple of Minerva at Sais, a city of Egypt, had this inscription on it,

"I am all that exists, is, and shall be."

And on the temple of Apollo at Delphos was written ei, the contraction of eimi, "I am" {a}. Our Lord seems to refer to this name, [Joh 8:58](#), and indeed is the person that now appeared; and the words may be rendered, "I shall be what I shall be" {b} the incarnate God, God manifest in the flesh:

thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you; or as the Targum of Jonathan has it,

"I am he that is, and that shall be."

This is the name Ehjeh, or Jehovah, Moses is empowered to make use of, and to declare, as the name of the Great God by whom he was sent; and which might serve both to encourage him, and strengthen the faith of the Israelites, that they should be delivered by him.

{z} Phutarch. de Iside & Osir. {a} Plato in Timaeo. {b} hyha rva hyha "ero qui ero", Pagninus, Montanus, Fagius, Vatablus.

Exodus 3:15

Ver. 15. **And God said moreover unto Moses**,.... As a further explanation of the above name, and of the design and use of it:

thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: for their further instruction in the said name, and for the confirmation of the mission of Moses, and the success of it:

the Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you; he who is Jehovah, and the covenant God of the ancestors of the people of Israel, and of them, so he is called, Ec 3:6this [is] my name for ever: meaning either "Ehjeh, I am", in the preceding verse, or, which is the same, Jehovah in this, and so both of them, and including also the name of the God of Abraham, &c. which he was always to be known by:and this is my memorial unto all generations; the name by which he should be made mention of both by himself and others, and by which he would be called to remembrance by his people, and what he had promised unto them, and done for them. Exodus 3:16Ver. 16. Go and gather the elders of Israel together,.... Not all the ancient men among them, nor the "judges" of the people of Israel; for it does not appear there were such among them in Egypt, until they came into the land of Canaan, but the heads of tribes or families:and say unto them, the Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me; in a flame of fire in the midst of a bush at Horeb:saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt; inspected into their state and circumstances, took notice of their afflictions and oppressions, and determined to deliver them out of them, as follows. Exodus 3:17Ver. 17. And I have said,.... Within himself, resolved in his own mind, and had declared it to Moses:I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt: with which they were afflicted in Egypt, and by the Egyptians; this he both purposed and promised to bring them out of: unto the land of the Canaanites, &c. then in the possession of the Canaanites, and others after named;See Gill on "Ex 3:8". Exodus 3:18Ver. 18. And they shall hearken to thy voice,.... The elders of Israel, who would give credit to his commission, attend to what he said, and obey his orders, and follow the directions that he should give them, and

not slight and reject him, as some had done before:and thou shall come, thou, and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt: the elders of Israel in a body, and Moses at the head of them; though we do not read of their approaching to Pharaoh, and addressing him in such a manner, only of Moses and Aaron applying to him:and you shall say unto him, the Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us; with one of them, who had reported to the rest what he had said; the children of Israel are here called Hebrews, because that seems to be a name the Egyptians most commonly called them, and by which they were best known to them, see Ge 39:14and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness; the wilderness of Sinai and Arabia, and to Mount Horeb in it; which from the borders of Egypt was three days' journey going the direct road, but the Israelites going somewhat about, and stopping by the way, did not get to it until the third month of their going out of Egypt, Ex 19:1:that we may sacrifice to the Lord God; in the place where he had appeared to a principal man among them, and where they would be in no danger of being insulted and molested by the Egyptians. Some think the reason of this request they were directed to make, to sacrifice out of the land of Egypt, was, because what they sacrificed the Egyptians worshipped as gods, and therefore would be enraged at such sacrifices; but for this there is no sufficient foundation; See Gill on "Ge 46:34", rather the design was under this pretence to get quite away from them, they being no subjects of the king of Egypt, nor had he a right to detain them; nor were they obliged to acquaint him with the whole of their intentions, and especially as they were directed of God himself to say this, and no more, and which being so reasonable, made Pharaoh's refusal the more inexcusable. Exodus 3:19Ver. 19. And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go,.... Or "but" {c} "I am sure", &c. though so reasonable a request was made him, yet it would not be granted; this is observed to them, that they might not be discouraged when he should refuse to dismiss them, which the omniscient God knew beforehand, and acquaints them with it, that, when it came to pass, they might be induced to believe that the mission of Moses was of God, rather than the contrary:no, not by a mighty hand; the mighty power of God displayed once and again, even in nine plagues inflicted on him, until the tenth and last came upon him; or "unless by a mighty hand" {d}, even the almighty hand of God; prayers, entreaties, persuasions, and arguments, will signify nothing, unless the mighty power of God is exerted upon him. {c} yna "ego autem", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; "sed ego", V. L. {d} alw ean mh Sept. "nisi", V. L. Pagninus, Vatablus; so Noldius, p. 344. No. 1246. Exodus 3:20Ver. 20. And I will stretch out my hand,.... Or "therefore" {e} he would stretch out his mighty hand, exert his almighty power; and for this purpose was Pharaoh raised up, and his heart hardened, that God might show his power in him, and on him:and smite Egypt with all my wonders, which I will do in the midst thereof: with those wondrous plagues, the amazing effects of his almighty power, which were wrought by him in the midst of Egypt, by which their land, their rivers, their persons, and their cattle, were smitten:and after that he will let you go; this is said for their

encouragement, that their faith and patience might hold out, who otherwise seeing him so obstinate and inflexible, might be ready to despair of ever succeeding. {e} w "ideo", "propterea", Noldius, p. 279. Exodus 3:21 Ver. 21. And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians,.... That is, give the Israelites favour in their sight, a little before their departure, who should be ready to do anything for them, or bestow anything upon them; or however lend them what they would desire, being glad to be at peace with them, or get rid of them, for whose sakes they would perceive all those sore calamities came upon them, they were distressed with:and it shall come to pass, that when ye go, ye shall not go empty; destitute of what was necessary for them, but even with great substance, as was foretold by Abraham they should, and which prophecy was now about to be fulfilled, Ge 15:14. Exodus 3:22 Ver. 22. But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house,.... Or "shall ask" {f}, desire them to give or lend, what follows; and by this it appears, that the Israelites by reason of their great increase were spread about, and mixed with the Egyptians; and hence it was that there was such a mixed multitude that went up with them out of Egypt, who either were in connection with them in civil things, or were proselyted by them:jewels of silver, and jewels of gold; that is, jewels set in silver and in gold; or "vessels of silver, and vessels of gold" {g}, plate of both sorts, cups, dishes, &c:and raiment; rich and goodly apparel, which they might borrow to appear in at their feast and sacrifices in the wilderness, whither they asked leave to go to:and ye shall put [them] upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and so deck and ornament them with them at the time of their departure:and ye shall spoil the Egyptians; and very justly, for the hard service they put them to; for which all this was but their wages due unto them, and which they would stand in need of in their travels to Canaan's land, and for the erection of the tabernacle, and providing things appertaining to it in the wilderness. {f} hlav aithsei Sept. "postulabit", V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Drusius; "petet", Junius & Tremellius. {g} ylk "vasa", V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Tigurine version, Drusius.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 4:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 4

This chapter is a continuation of the discourse that passed between God and Moses; and here Moses makes other objections to his mission; one is taken from the unbelief of the people of Israel, which is removed by giving him power to work miracles, by turning the rod in his hand into a serpent, and then into a rod again; and by putting his hand into his bosom at one time, when it became leprous, and again into the same place, when it became sound and whole, and by turning the water of the river into blood, [Ex 4:1](#), another objection is formed from his want of eloquence, which is answered with an assurance, that God, that made man's mouth, would be with his mouth, and teach him what to say; and besides, Aaron his brother, who was an eloquent man, should be his spokesman, [Ex 4:10](#) upon which he returned to Midian, and having obtained leave of his father-in-law to depart from thence, he took his wife and his sons, and returned to Egypt, [Ex 4:18](#) at which time he received some fresh instructions from the Lord what he should do before Pharaoh, and what he should say unto him, [Ex 4:21](#) then follows an account of what befell him by the way, because of the circumcision of his son, [Ex 4:24](#) and the chapter is closed with an account of the meeting of Moses and Aaron, and of their gathering the elders of Israel together, to whom the commission of Moses was opened, and signs done before them, to which they gave credit, and expressed their joy and thankfulness, [Ex 4:27](#).

Ver. 1. **And Moses answered and said,**.... In reference to what Jehovah had declared to him in the latter end of the preceding chapter:

but, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken to my voice; this seems to contradict what God had said to him, [Ex 3:18](#) that they would hearken to his voice; but it can hardly be thought, that so good a man, and so great a prophet as Moses was, would directly fly in the face of God, and expressly contradict what he had said. To reconcile this it may be observed, that what the Lord says respects only the elders of Israel, this all the people; or Jehovah's meaning may be, and so this of Moses, that neither the one nor the other would regard his bare word, without some sign or miracle being wrought; for as his call was extraordinary, so it required something extraordinary to be done that it might be credited:

for they will say, the Lord hath not appeared unto me: in the bush, as he would affirm he did, and might do it with the greatest assurance; yet the thing being so marvellous, and they not eyewitnesses of it, might distrust the truth of it, or be backward to receive

it on his bare word; and this Moses might rather fear would be the case, from the experience he had had of them forty years ago, when it was more likely for him to have been a deliverer of them.

Exodus 4:2

Ver. 2. **And the Lord said unto him**,.... Not reproving him for contradicting him, or showing any diffidence of what he had said; but rather as approving the hint he gave of having some sign or miracle wrought, to command from the Israelites an assent unto him, as commissioned of God to deliver them:

what [is] that in thine hand? which question is put, not as being ignorant of what it was, but to lead on to what he had further to say, and to the working of the miracle:

and he said, a rod; or staff, such as shepherds use in the management of their flocks, for Moses was now feeding the flock of his father-in-law; but Aben Ezra seems rather to think it was a walking staff, such as ancient men lean upon, since Moses did not go to Pharaoh after the manner of a shepherd; yea, it may be added, he went with the authority of a prince or ruler of Israel, and even with the authority of the ambassador of the King of kings.

Exodus 4:3

Ver. 3. **And he said, cast it on the ground**,.... That is, the rod or staff:

and he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; not in appearance only, but in reality, it was changed into a real living serpent; for God, who is the author of nature, can change the nature of things as he pleases; nor is it to be supposed that he would only make it look to the sight as if it was one, by working upon the fancy and imagination to think it was one, when it was not; no doubt but it was as really turned into a true serpent, as the water was turned really and truly into wine by our Lord; this was the first miracle that ever was wrought, that we know of. Dr. Lightfoot {h} observes, that as a serpent was the fittest emblem of the devil, [Ge 3:1](#) so was it a sign that Moses did not these miracles by the power of the devil, but had a power over and beyond him, when he could thus deal with the serpent at his pleasure, as to make his rod a serpent, and the serpent a rod, as he saw good:

and Moses fled from before it; the Jews say {i} it was a fiery serpent, but for this they have no warrant: however, without supposing that it might be terrible and frightful,

inasmuch as a common serpent is very disagreeable to men, and such an uncommon and extraordinary one must be very surprising, to see a staff become a serpent, a living one, crawling and leaping about, and perhaps turning itself towards Moses, whose staff it had been. Philo the Jew {k} says, it was a dragon, an exceeding large one.

{h} Works, vol. 1. p. 702. {i} Pirke Eliezer, c. 40. {k} De Vita Mosls, l. 1. 614.

Exodus 4:4

Ver. 4. **And the Lord said to Moses, put forth thy hand, and take it by the tail,**.... Which to do might seem most dangerous, since it might turn upon him and bite him; this was ordered, partly that Moses might be assured it was really a serpent, and not in appearance only; and partly to try his courage, and it suggested to him, that he need not be afraid of it, it would not hurt him: the above learned doctor observes {l}, that he is commanded to take it by the tail; for to meddle with the serpent's head belonged not to Moses, but to Christ that spake to him out of the bush:

and he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand; as it was before. Some think this refers to the threefold state of the Israelites, first to their flourishing estate under Joseph, when they were as a rod or staff, then to their dejected state, by this rod cast to the ground, and become a serpent, and lastly to their restoration and liberty, by its becoming a rod again: others refer it to Christ, who is the power of God, and the rod of his strength, and who in his state of humiliation was like this rod, cast to the ground and became a serpent, of which the brazen serpent was a type, and who by his resurrection from the dead regained his former power; but perhaps they may be most right who think it refers to the service and ministry of Moses, which seemed terrible to him at first, like a hurtful serpent, from which he fled; but after he was confirmed by the word of God, he readily undertook it.

{l} De Vita Mosis, l. 1. 614.

Exodus 4:5

Ver. 5. **That they may believe,**.... The elders and people of Israel; for this miracle was wrought not for the confirmation of Moses's faith; for, as Aben Ezra observes, the sign of the burning bush was given to him to confirm his faith, that it was God that appeared to him, and called him to this work; but this was wrought to confirm the faith of the Israelites in his divine mission:

that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee;
See Gill on "Ex 3:6".

Exodus 4:6

Ver. 6. **And the Lord said furthermore unto him,**.... Continued his discourse, and gave him another sign:

put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom; within his coat, under that part of the garment next to his breast:

and when he took it out, behold, his hand [was] leprous as snow; that is, white as snow, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, through the leprosy that was upon it; it was a leprosy of the white sort, and which is reckoned the worst and most difficult to be cured, see

[Le 13:3](#). It is highly probable that this gave rise to the story told by several Heathen writers, as Manetho {m}, Lysimachus {n}, Trogus {o}, and Tacitus {p}, that Moses and the Israelites were drove out of Egypt by the advice of an oracle, because they had the leprosy, itch, and other impure diseases upon them.

{m} Apud Joseph. contr. Apion. l. 1. c. 26. {n} Apud. ib. c. 34. {o} Justin e Trogo, l. 36. c. 2. {p} Hist. l. 5. c. 3.

Exodus 4:7

Ver. 7. **And he said, put thine hand into thy bosom again,**.... With the leprosy on it:

and he put his hand into his bosom again, and plucked it out of his bosom; quickly after he had put it in:

and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh; it was cured of the leprosy, and recovered its colour, and was as sound as before, and as any other part of his body. This was a very astonishing miracle, that he should be at once smote with a leprosy; that this should be only in his hand, and not in any other part of his body; and that it should be cured immediately, without the use of any means; and by this miracle Moses, and the Israelites, might be instructed and confirmed in the power of God, that he that could so suddenly inflict such a disease, and so easily cure it, was able to

deliver them out of captivity, which was as death; and that however until Moses might be in himself to be a deliverer of the people, signified by his weak and leprous hand, yet being quickened and strengthened by the Lord, would be able to answer to the character; though, after all, the deliverance must be imputed not to his hand and power, but to the mighty hand and power of God.

Exodus 4:8

Ver. 8. **And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee,....** Will not give credit to the commission he had from God, but question the truth of it:

neither hearken to the voice of the first sign; which miracle wrought, spoke plain enough that he that wrought it, or for whose sake it was wrought, must be one come from God, or such a miracle would never be wrought by him or for him; but should any of the Israelites be still incredulous, it is supposed,

that they will believe the voice of the latter sign; which had a voice in it commanding belief that he was a messenger of God; the first sign respects his rod, the other his hand.

Exodus 4:9

Ver. 9. **And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs,....** Performed before their eyes; for these were done over again when Moses came into Egypt to the Israelites, and yet some of them might still remain unbelievers to his commission, and so to the voice of these signs, which loudly called for their faith:

neither hearken unto thy voice; affirming he came from God, and was sent to be the deliverer of them:

that thou shalt take of the water of the river; of the river Nile, when he should come into Egypt; wherefore Josephus {q} is mistaken when he intimates that this was done at the same time with the other signs; and was water he took near at hand and poured on the ground: but Philo {r} truly refers this to Egypt, where it was done, as it ought to be:

and pour [it] upon the dry land, and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land; by which it would appear how easily the Lord could destroy the land of Egypt, and make it a barren land, whose fertility was owing to the

overflow of the river Nile as a means; and this would be a specimen also of what he would do hereafter, in turning the waters of the river into blood, thereby avenging the blood of innocent babes drowned there by the Egyptians.

{q} Antiqu. 1. 2. c. 12. sect. 3. {r} De Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 614.

Exodus 4:10

Ver. 10. **And Moses said unto the Lord**,.... Notwithstanding the above miracles, he seems unwilling to go on the Lord's errand to Pharaoh and to the Israelites, and therefore invents a new objection after all his other objections had been sufficiently answered:

I am not eloquent; or "a man of words" {s}, that has words at command, that can speak well readily, and gracefully; such an one, he intimates, was proper to be sent to a king's court, that was an orator, that could make fine speeches, and handsome addresses, for which he was not qualified:

neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken to thy servant; neither in his younger years had he ever been an eloquent man, nor was there any alteration in him in that respect, since God had given him this call:

but I [am] slow of speech, and of a slow tongue; had some impediment in his speech, could not freely and easily bring out his words, or rightly pronounce them; so Lucian {t} the Heathen calls Moses slow tongued, or one slow of speech, and uses the same word the Septuagint does here, which version perhaps he had seen, and from thence took it.

{s} Myrbd vya "vir verborum", Paguinus, Montanus, Piscator, Ainsworth. {t} In Philopatride.

Exodus 4:11

Ver. 11. **And the Lord said unto him, who hath made man's mouth?**.... Made that itself, and put in it the power and faculty of speech, even into the mouth of the first man, Adam, as the Targum of Jonathan; and so of every other man, did not the Lord do it? none else could, and therefore he that made it, and made it capable of speaking, could remove any impediments in it, and cause it to speak freely and fluently:

or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I, the Lord? as all the senses, and the perfection of them, are from him, so all the imperfections in them are according to his good pleasure; what he suffers to be, and can remedy when he thinks fit: it is he that gives the seeing eye and hearing ear, can and does make blind and deaf, that gives also the speaking mouth, and makes that dumb, and can open it again as he pleases! and what is it that he cannot do?

Exodus 4:12

Ver. 12. Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth,.... And put words into it, and cause it to speak readily and powerfully; and so it appears that he was mighty in words, as well as in deeds, [Ac 7:22](#):

and teach thee what thou shalt say; to Pharaoh, to the Israelites, and to Aaron, that was to speak for him, as is hereafter observed.

Exodus 4:13

Ver. 13. And he said, O my Lord,.... Acknowledging his dominion, his sovereignty, his power to do the above things: or "on me, O Lord" {u}, be the blame for making such objections; or on me let this work be devolved, since it is thy pleasure:

send, I pray thee, by the hand [of him whom] thou wilt send. Many of the ancient Christian fathers understand it of the Messiah that was to be sent, and as if Moses thought this was a fit time for the sending of him: and so Cocceius is of opinion, that nothing better can be understood, than that Moses desired that God would rather send him, whom Israel expected to be sent, even the Angel that should go before them; of whose mission see [Ex 23:20](#), but no particular person is intended, unless himself; and the common interpretation is, that God would send a more fit and proper person than he was; and that he would rather send anyone but him, and entreats to be excused; but I see not why this may not be understood of Moses assenting to his mission, and acquiescing in the will of God; as if he should say, since it must be so, the will of the Lord be done, let him send by whom he will, and since it is his pleasure to send by me, I submit; what may seem to contradict this is, the Lord's anger and resentment expressed in the following words; but that might be notwithstanding, since Moses had been so backward and reluctant, and made so many objections before he consented.

{u} ynda yb "in me", Oleaster.

[Exodus 4:14](#)

Ver. 14. **And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses,**.... For the objections, excuses, and delays he made with respect to his mission. In what way this anger was expressed is not easy to say, whether by not removing the impediment of his speech, or not giving him the priesthood, which Jarchi thinks he otherwise would have had, and Aaron been only a Levite, as he is called in the next clause; or whether it was by joining Aaron to him, and so lessening his honour in this embassy, though that seems to be done to encourage him; or by not suffering him to lead the children of Israel into the land of Canaan, which yet is ascribed to another cause. However, though the Lord was angry with Moses, yet without any change of affection to him, he still retained and expressed a great regard to him; did not reject him from his service as he might have done, but employed him, and preferred him to his elder brother. Moses shows himself to be a faithful historian in recording his own weaknesses, and the displeasure of God at them:

and he said, is not Aaron the Levite thy brother; he was, and his elder brother, he was born three years before him, [Ex 7:7](#) though Justin {w}, an Heathen writer, says he was his son, and calls his name Aruas, and speaks of him as an Egyptian priest, and that he was made king after Moses's death; hence, he says, was the custom with the Jews for the same persons to be kings and priests; in all which he is mistaken. But Artapanus {x}, another Heathen writer, calls him the brother of Moses, and by his right name, Aaron; and says it was by his advice Moses fled into Arabia, and speaks of his meeting him afterwards, when he was sent to the king of Egypt. Aaron is called the Levite, because he was a descendant of Levi, and yet so was Moses; perhaps this is added here, to distinguish him from others of the same name in other families, as Aben Ezra thinks; for as for what Jarchi suggests, as before, is without any foundation; and it is much more likely that Moses added this title to him, in his account of this affair, because he was the first of the tribe of Levi that was employed in the priestly office:

I know that he can speak well; or "in speaking speak" {y}, speak very freely, fluently, in an eloquent manner; in which he was an eminent type of Christ, who is our advocate with the father, and has the tongue of the learned to speak a word in season; and does speak and plead for the conversion of his people, for the comfort of them, for the discoveries of pardoning grace and mercy to them; and for the carrying on the work of grace in them, and their perseverance to the end, and for their eternal glorification. The prayer in [Joh 17:1](#) is a specimen of this:

and also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee; having had an intimation from God of

Moses's call to come into Egypt, and deliver his people from their bondage, he immediately set out to meet him, whereby he showed more faith, zeal, and courage, than Moses did; and this is said to animate him, and was a new sign, and would be a fresh confirmation of his faith, when he should see it accomplished, as he did:

and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart: sincerely glad, and not only secretly so, but would express his cordial joy with his lips; not only because of his having a sight of his brother once more, whom he had not seen for forty years past, but because of his coming on such an errand from God, to deliver the people of Israel; and therefore, as he would express such gladness on this occasion, it became Moses to engage in this work with the utmost pleasure and cheerfulness.

{w} E Trogo, l. 36. c. 2. {x} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 433, 434.
{y} rbdy rbd "loquendo loquetur", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius.

Exodus 4:15

Ver. 15. **And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth,**.... Or "things" {z}, the matter and substance of what he should say, who being a man of words, an eloquent man, and a good spokesman, would put them into proper language, and express them fluently:

and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do; or speak what Moses should say to Aaron, and what Aaron should say to Pharaoh, and to the people of Israel; so that as Aaron was under Moses, and at his direction, they were both dependent on the Lord, and under his direction; and the one, as well as the other, needed his assistance, even Aaron that could speak well. Moses furnished him with matter, he put it into words, and both were instructed and influenced by the Lord what they should say and do.

{z} Myrbdh ta.

Exodus 4:16

Ver. 16. **And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people,**.... And open to them Moses's commission from God, and the end of his mission into Egypt, and to them, and declare what signs had been, and would be done, in confirmation of it:

and he shall be, [even] he shall be to thee instead of a mouth; or an interpreter, as all

the Targums explain it, and so Jarchi; as he was an orator and master of language, he should speak to the people for Moses, and explain his sense and meaning, and put it into plain, proper, easy language, to be understood by the people; and this may be done where a different language is not spoken, but the same in plainer words, in more pertinent expressions, and better pronounced, and this is repeated for the certainty of it:

and thou shall be to him instead of God; Aaron was to stand between Moses and the people, and speak for him; and Moses was to stand between God and Aaron, and in God's stead, and tell him what orders he had received from him, and which he should communicate; and so some Jewish writers {a} interpret it of his being to him instead of a master or teacher, one that received doctrine from the Lord, and instructed him in it, and taught him the mind and will of God: or, as Onkelos paraphrases it; "for a prince", and so Jarchi, a civil magistrate, one that had the power of life and death; the administration of civil affairs belonged to Moses, and Aaron, though the elder brother, was subject to him; and in this sense Moses was a god to him; and so in after times, the judges of Israel, they that sat in Moses's chair, were called gods, [Ps 82:1](#).

{a} Targum Jon. Jerus. & Abendana in loc.

[Exodus 4:17](#)

Ver. 17. **And thou shall take this rod in thine hand**,.... Which he then had in his hand, and was no other than his shepherd's staff:

wherewith thou shall do signs: wondrous things, meaning the ten plagues inflicted on Egypt.

[Exodus 4:18](#)

Ver. 18. **And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father in law**,.... With his flock of sheep he kept, [Ex 3:1](#): and said unto him,

let me go, I pray thee, and return to my brethren which are in Egypt; the Israelites, who were so by nation and religion; as Jethro had been kind and beneficent to him, he did not choose to leave him without his knowledge and consent, and especially to take away his wife and children without it:

and see whether they be yet alive; it seems by this that Moses had heard nothing of

them during the forty years he lived in Midian, which may be thought strange, since it was not very far from Egypt; and besides the Midianites traded in Egypt, as we learn from [Ge 37:28](#) but this must be ascribed to the providence of God, that so ordered it, that there should be no intercourse between him and his brethren, that so no step might be taken by them for their deliverance until the set time was come. Moses did not acquaint his father-in-law with the principal reason of his request, nor of his chief end in going into Egypt, which it might not be proper to acquaint him with, he being of another nation, though a good man; and lest he should use any arguments to dissuade Moses from going, who now having got clear of his diffidence and distrust, was determined upon it: though some ascribe this to his modesty in not telling Jethro of the glorious and wonderful appearance of God to him, and of the honour he had conferred on him to be the deliverer and governor of the people of Israel:

and Jethro said to Moses, go in peace; he judged his request reasonable, and gave his full consent to it, and wished him health and prosperity in his journey.

[Exodus 4:19](#)

Ver. 19. [And the Lord said unto Moses in Midian,....](#) After he had obtained leave of his father-in-law to quit Midian, but before he left it;

[go, return into Egypt](#): that is, directly, immediately; before he had only given him a commission at large to go thither, but had not fixed the time when he should go; but now he orders him to set forward at once: for all the men are dead which sought thy life; to take it away, the king of Egypt, and his ministers, and the friends of the Egyptian Moses had slain; and this is said to encourage him to go; and though Moses had never expressed his fear on this account, or made it an objection, yet it might lie secretly in his heart, and be one reason of his backwardness to go into Egypt, and which was now removed. Exodus 4:20 Ver. 20. And Moses took his wife, and his sons,.... Gershom and Eliezer; by which it appears that he intended to stay in Egypt, and that he believed that God would work deliverance by him: and set them upon an ass: which though with us a mean creature, yet in those times and countries were rode upon by great personages; and these, as Aben Ezra says, were reckoned in Egypt more honourable than mules. It may be the singular is put for the plural, and that each of them was set upon an ass, with servants to take care of them: and he returned to the land of Egypt; that is, he set forward to go thither; for before he got thither, various things are related which befell him: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand: his shepherd's staff, so called, because God ordered him to take it; and besides, he had wrought signs and wonders by it already, and would do many more. Exodus 4:21 Ver. 21. And the Lord said unto Moses,.... At the same time he appeared to him in Midian,

and ordered him to go into Egypt, even before his departure thither: when thou goest to return into Egypt; and when got thither; for before the thing directed to in the next clause could not be done: see that thou do all these wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in thine hand; not the three signs or wonders, related in the preceding part of the chapter, for they were to be done not before Pharaoh, but before the children of Israel; but these are the wonders he was to do in the sight of Pharaoh, by inflicting the various plagues on him and his people, for refusing to let Israel go, and which God had put in the power of Moses to perform, and that by means of the rod in his hand he ordered him to take with him, Ex 4:17: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go; that is, not directly, not for some time, not until all the wonders are wrought, and plagues inflicted to bring him to it: he first hardening his own heart against God, and all remonstrances made unto him, it was but a righteous thing in God to give him up to the hardness of his heart, to deny him his grace, which only could soften it, and to leave him to the corruptions of his nature, and the temptations of Satan; and by leaving him to strong delusions, to believe the lying miracles of his magicians: this the Lord thought fit to acquaint Moses with, lest he should be discouraged by his refusal to dismiss Israel. Exodus 4:22 Ver. 22. And thou shall say unto Pharaoh,.... When arrived in Egypt, and in his presence: thus saith the Lord; he was to declare to him that he came in his name, and by his orders, and, as an ambassador of his, required the dismissal of the children of Israel out of Egypt: Israel [is] my son, [even] my firstborn; as dear to him as a man's firstborn is, or as his only son: adoption is one of the privileges peculiar to Israel after the flesh, even national adoption, with all the external privileges appertaining to it, Ro 9:4. Exodus 4:23 Ver. 23. And I say unto thee, let my son go, that he may serve me,.... Worship God according to his will in the place he had designed for him, and where he might be safe and free; and which service was due from him as a son, and to be performed not in a servile way, but in a filial manner, and therefore as a servant he could demand his dismissal, and much more as his son; and this is required in an authoritative way, for saying is here commanding, insisting on it as a point of right to be done: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn; meaning, not only in a strict and literal sense Pharaoh's firstborn son, and heir to his crown, but the firstborn of all his subjects, which in a civil sense were his. This was not to be said to Pharaoh at the first opening of his commission to him, but after all methods had been tried, and the several other plagues designed were inflicted on him to no purpose, he was to be told this, which was the last plague, and succeeded; but this is told to Moses before hand, that when other messages he should be sent with to him, and all that should be done by him would prove ineffectual, this, when sent with and performed, would have the desired effect. Exodus 4:24 Ver. 24. And it came to pass by the way, in the inn,.... As Moses and his family were travelling in their way to Egypt, at an inn where they stopped for the refreshment of themselves and cattle, or in order to lodge all night: so it was, that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him; not the

uncircumcised son of Moses, as some think, but Moses himself, who had neglected the circumcision of his son; that from the context, and the fact of Zipporah, after related, seems to be the reason of the divine displeasure, and not his bringing his family with him, supposed to be an hinderance of him in his work, nor of his staying too long at the inn, and not hastening his journey, which are the reasons given by some: and Moses's neglect of circumcision was not owing to the disuse of it among the Midianites, who being the descendants of Abraham, it is highly probable they retained this rite, and that it was used in Jethro's family, since Zipporah well understood the nature of it, and how to perform it; and it looks as if her eldest son had been circumcised before, seeing only one was now circumcised by her; but the Midianites perhaps followed the same practice as the Ishmaelites did, who were their neighbours, and the descendants of Abraham also, who deferred it till their children were thirteen years of age; or if this child was a very young one, it might have been put off, because of the journey they were just about to take, and purposing to do it when come into Egypt; but this was resented by the Lord in Moses, who had such knowledge of the law of God; and this displeasure of Jehovah might be signified either by inflicting some disease upon him, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi think, which threatened him with death, or by appearing in a terrible manner, as the angel of the Lord did to Balaam, with a drawn sword in his hand. Exodus 4:25 Ver. 25. Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son,.... Perceiving that it was the neglect of circumcising her son was the cause of the divine displeasure against her husband; and he being either so ill through the disease upon him, or so terrified with the appearance of the Lord to him, in the manner it was, that he could not perform this rite himself, she undertook it; and, according to the Jewish canons {b}, a woman may circumcise; and having with her no instrument more proper to do it with, took a sharp stone, very probably a flint, of which there was great plenty in Arabia Petraea, where she was, and did it; and so the Jewish writers say {c}, they circumcise with a flint stone, with glass, or anything that will cut; and such like actions have been performed with sharp stones among the Heathens {d}: and cast it at his feet; not at the feet of the infant Eliezer, as R. Samuel in Aben Ezra; the blood of the circumcision running down to his feet, as Lyra interprets it; and so touched his feet {e}, as some render the words; not cast at the feet of the destroying angel, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, in order to pacify him; but at the feet of Moses, as the Jerusalem Talmud {f}; and so Jarchi and Aben Ezra:and said, surely a bloody husband art thou to me; those who think it was at the feet of the child the foreskin was cast, take these words to be spoken of that, and observe that it is usual for women, at the circumcision of a child, to call it a bridegroom or husband, because it is then espoused unto, and reckoned among the people of God; but this is not well supported; it is a custom of too late a date to give any countenance to such a sense of the words, which seem plain enough to be spoken to and of Moses; but not in an angry upbraiding way, as if he was a bloody cruel man to oblige her to do such an action,

but rather in a congratulatory way, as being thankful and rejoicing, that by this means, through the blood of the circumcision, she had saved her husband's life; and as it were in that way had bought him, and afresh espoused him to herself as her husband; or otherwise it would have been all over with him, but now to her great joy he was delivered from the threatened destruction, and restored to her; and so the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase the next verse, "then Zipporah gave praise, and said, how amiable is the blood of circumcision, which hath delivered my husband from the hand of the destroying angel." {b} Maimon. Hilchot Milah, c. 2. sect. 1. Shulchan Aruch, par. 2. Yore Dea, Hilchot Milah, c. 264. sect. 1. {c} Maimon. ib. Shulchan ib. sect. 2. {d} "Mollia qui rupta secuit genitalia testa." Juvenal Satyr 6. "Devolvit ipse acuto sibi pondera silice." Catullus. {e} wylgrl egtw "tetigitque pedes ejus", V. L. {f} T. Hieros. Nedarim, fol. 38. 2. Exodus 4:26 Ver. 26. So he let him go,.... That is, the Lord let Moses go; suffered him to go on his journey without any further interruption; as the Targums, "it", the angel, ceased from him, or left him; or the disease and trembling departed from him, as Aben Ezra, and he was quite well and easy; though Grotius, after Lyra, understands it of Zipporah, she departed from him, that is, from Moses, and returned to Midian again, as it seems she did; but this the grammatical construction of the words will not bear, being masculine, though sometimes the masculine is used of women, as in Ex 1:21: then she said, a bloody husband thou art because of the circumcision; this is repeated, partly to give the reason of her calling him a bloody husband, because of the circumcision, and partly because of her great joy on occasion of her husband's restoration to her by this means. Exodus 4:27 Ver. 27. And the Lord said unto Aaron,.... He appeared to him in a dream or vision, and to this reference is had in 1Sa 2:27 go into the wilderness to meet Moses; in the wilderness of Arabia, through which Moses was to pass into Egypt, and who was now set out on his journey thitherward: and he went; immediately, being obedient to the heavenly vision: and met him in the mount of God; in Horeb, where the Lord had appeared to Moses, and therefore called the mount of God, and where afterwards the law was given, and the covenant made with the people of Israel; and so the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it, "in the mount on which the glory of God was revealed:" and kissed him: as relations and intimate friends used to do at meeting or parting, to testify affection and respect; and Aaron must on all accounts be glad to meet Moses, both as he was his brother, whom he had not seen for many years, and as he was come to be a deliverer of the people of Israel. And it is observed, that it was but two days' journey from the land of Midian, where Jethro lived, from whence Moses set out; and that a common traveller cannot conveniently make the journey from Ramesses, or Grand Cairo (from whence it may be supposed Aaron set out), to Mount Horeb, in less than a fortnight, though he be carried on the back of a camel {g}; and yet Aaron reached this place by the time that Moses did, which shows that either he delayed setting out on his journey, or was detained long at the inn on the road, on account of what happened there. {g} Clayton's Chronology of the Hebrew

Bible, p 221. Exodus 4:28Ver. 28. And Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord, who had sent him,.... He declared his mission and commission from God, and gave him the particulars of what was to be said both to the people of Israel and to the king of Egypt; and this he did, because Aaron was to be his spokesman unto them:and all the signs which he had commanded him; to do, first before the children of Israel, and then before Pharaoh; before the one to obtain credit of them, as being sent of God, and before the other to get leave of him for the departure of Israel out of Egypt. Exodus 4:29Ver. 29. And Moses and Aaron went,.... Set forward for Egypt: and being come thither,gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel; the heads of tribes and families, as many as they could conveniently get together in one place; probably in the metropolis of the kingdom, where Pharaoh's palace was, since we quickly hear of their going in to him. Exodus 4:30Ver. 30. And Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses,.... As Moses had related to him, being his mouth and spokesman:and did the signs in the sight of the people; not Aaron, but Moses, and these were the turning of his rod into a serpent, and the serpent into a rod again; putting his hand into and out of his bosom, when it was leprous, and then doing the same when it was well again; and taking water out of the river, and changing it into blood, which he did for the confirmation of his mission. Exodus 4:31Ver. 31. And the people believed,.... That Moses was sent of God, and would be the deliverer of them:and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel; in a way of grace and mercy, by raising such a redeemer and deliverer in the midst of them:and that he had looked upon their affliction; with an eye of pity and compassion:then they bowed their heads, and worshipped; adoring the goodness of God, and expressing their thankfulness for the notice he took of them, and signifying their readiness to obey all instructions and directions that should be given them.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 5:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 5

Moses and Aaron go in to Pharaoh, and desire leave for the children of Israel to go into the wilderness three days' journey, to sacrifice to the Lord, and are answered in a very churlish and atheistical manner, and are charged with making the people idle, the consequence of which was, the taskmasters had orders, to make their work more heavy and toilsome, [Ex 5:1](#) which orders were executed with severity by them, [Ex 5:10](#), upon which the officers of the children of Israel complained to Pharaoh, but to no purpose, [Ex 5:14](#), and meeting with Moses and Aaron, lay the blame upon them, [Ex 5:20](#), which sends Moses to the Lord to expostulate with him about it, [Ex 5:22](#).

Ver. 1. [And afterwards Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh](#),.... Whose name, some say, was Cenchres, others Amenophis, according to Manetho and Chaeremon {h}; See Gill on "Ex 3:10" went into Pharaoh's palace, and being introduced by the proper officer at court for that purpose, addressed him in the following manner:

[thus saith the Lord God of Israel](#): as ambassadors of him, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords; and so Artapanus {i}, the Heathen, says that the Egyptian king, hearing that Moses was come, sent for him to know wherefore he was come, who told him, that the Lord of the world commanded him to let the Jews go, as it follows here:

[let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness](#); in the wilderness of Sinai or Arabia, at Horeb there, where they might keep it more freely and safely, without being disturbed by the Egyptians, and without giving any offence to them; and the demand is just; they were the people of God, and therefore he claims them, and service from them was due to him; and Pharaoh had no right to detain them, and what is required was but their reasonable service they owed to their God. This feast was to be held, not for themselves, but to God, which chiefly consisted in offering sacrifice, as is after explained; the entire dismissal of them is not at once demanded, only to go a little while into the wilderness, and keep a feast there to the Lord; though it was not intended they should return, but it was put in this form to try Pharaoh, and that he might be the more inexcusable in refusing to grant what was so reasonable.

{h} Apud Joseph. contr. Apion. l. 1. c. 26. 32. {i} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 434.

Exodus 5:2

Ver. 2. **And Pharaoh said, who is the Lord,**.... Jehovah, they made mention of, which, whether he took it for the name of a deity, or of a king, whose ambassadors they declared themselves to be, was a name he had never heard of before; and this being expressed and pronounced, shows that this name is not ineffable, or unlawful to be pronounced, as say the Jews:

that I should obey his voice, to let Israel go? he knew of no superior monarch to him, whose orders he was obliged to obey in any respect, and particularly in this, the dismissal of the people of Israel out of his land, though it was but for a short time:

I know not the Lord; who this Jehovah is, that made this demand, and required Israel's dismissal. The Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it,

"I have not found the name of Jehovah written in the book of angels, I am not afraid of him."

An Egyptian book, in which, the paraphrast supposes, were written the names of gods and of angels; and no such name being there, he was the more bold and insolent:

neither will I let Israel go; determining he would pay no regard to such an unknown Deity, or King, be he who he would.

Exodus 5:3

Ver. 3. **And they said, the God of the Hebrews hath met with us,**.... Perceiving that the name Jehovah was unknown to him, and treated by him in a scornful manner, they leave it out, and only say, "the God of the Hebrews": a people that dwelt in his country, he well knew by this name, and could not be ignorant that their God was different from his; and it was he that had met Moses and Aaron; they did not seek to him to be sent on this errand, but he appeared to them as he did to Moses at Horeb, and to Aaron in Egypt. Some render it, "the God of the Hebrews is called upon us" {f}; his name was called upon them, or they were called by his name; they were his servants and worshippers, and therefore under obligation to attend to what he enjoined them:

let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert: a request which was made in a very humble and modest manner, and not at all extravagant, nor anything

dangerous and disadvantageous to him; for now they speak as of themselves, and therefore humbly entreat him; they do not ask to be wholly and for ever set free, only to go for three days; they do not propose to meet and have their rendezvous in any part of his country, much less in his metropolis, where he might fear they would rise in a body, and seize upon his person and treasure, only to go into the wilderness, to Mount Sinai there. And hence it appears, that the distance between Egypt and Mount Sinai was three days' journey, to go the straightest way, as Aben Ezra observes:

and sacrifice unto the Lord our God: which is what was meant by keeping a feast; some sacrifices the people, as well as the priests, feasted on; this was not a civil, but a religious concern:

lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword: this they urge as a reason to have their request granted, taken from the danger they should be exposed unto, should they not be allowed to go and offer sacrifice to God; though by this they might suggest both loss and danger to Pharaoh, in order to stir him up the more to listen to their request; for should they be smitten with pestilence, or the sword, he would lose the benefit of their bond service, which would be a considerable decline in his revenues; and besides, if God would be so displeased with the Israelites for not going, and not sacrificing, when they were detained, how much more displeased would he be with Pharaoh and the Egyptians for hindering them?

{f} wnyle arqn "est invocatus super nos", Montanus. So some in Vatablus, Drusius.

[Exodus 5:4](#)

Ver. 4. **And the king of Egypt said to them,**.... For he was not struck dumb, as Artapanus {g}, afore cited writer, says:

wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? as they did when they gathered them together, and wrought signs before them; which Pharaoh it seems had heard of, and had got their names very readily:

get you unto your burdens; meaning not Moses and Aaron, ordering them to go about their private and family business, but the people they represented, and on whose account they came; and it is highly probable the elders of the people, at least some of them, were with them, to whom these words might be more particularly directed. See [Ex 3:18](#).

{g} Ut supra. (Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 434.)

Exodus 5:5

Ver. 5. **And Pharaoh said, behold, the people of the land now are many,....** So that if some were taken off, as suggested, there were enough of them to do business and so he cared not; but if allowed to go, they might mutiny and rebel, and give a great deal of trouble to quell them; or it may be, the sense is, they were very numerous, and too numerous already, and if they were took off of their work, and allowed to go a feasting, they would be more so, which agrees with the next clause:

and you make them rest from their burdens; which was the way to make them more numerous still, and to frustrate the design of laying burdens upon them, which was originally intended to hinder the multiplication of them, Ex 1:9.

Exodus 5:6

Ver. 6. **And Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people,....** Who were Egyptians, and whom Pharaoh sent for the same day, to give them orders to oppress them yet more and more, so far was he from complying with their request:

[and] their officers; who were Israelites, and were under the taskmasters, and accountable to them for each man's work that they had the inspection and care of:

saying, as follows.

Exodus 5:7

Ver. 7. **Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick,....** Whether this was given and used to mix with the clay, as is done in some places {h}, that the bricks made thereof might be firmer and stronger, or to burn them with in the furnaces, or to cover them from the heat of the sun, that they might not dry too soon and crack, is not easy to determine; though it is said that the unburnt bricks of Egypt formerly were, and still are made of clay mixed with straw. The Egyptian pyramid of unburnt brick, Dr. Pococke {i} observes, seems to be made of the earth brought by the Nile, being of a sandy black earth, with some pebbles and shells in it; it is mixed up with chopped straw, in order to bind the clay together, as they now make unburnt bricks in Egypt, and many other eastern parts, which they use very much in their buildings. He says he found some of these bricks (of the pyramid) thirteen inches and a half long, six inches

and a half broad, and four inches thick; and others fifteen inches long, seven broad, and four inches three quarters thick. But be the straw for what use it will, it had been dealt out to them by proper persons to be used in one way or another; but now it was forbidden to be given them,

as heretofore it had been done:

let them go and gather straw for themselves; out of the fields where it lay, after the corn had been reaped and gathered in, or in barns, where it had been threshed; to do which must take up a good deal of their time, and especially if the straw lay at any distance, or was hard to be come at.

{h} Vide Vitruvium de Architectura, l. 2. c. 3. p. 46. & Philander in ib. {i}
Observations on Egypt, p. 53.

Exodus 5:8

Ver. 8. And the tale of the bricks, which they did make heretofore, you shall lay upon them,.... Oblige them to make and bring in the same number of bricks they used to do, when straw was brought to them and given them; by which it appears, that their daily task was such a number of bricks:

you shall not diminish ought thereof; not make any abatement of the number of bricks, in consideration of their loss of time and their labour in going to fetch straw from other places:

for they be idle; and want to be indulged in a lazy disposition, which ought by no means to be connived at:

therefore they cry, let us go and sacrifice to our God; suggesting, that this request and cry of theirs did not proceed from a religious principle, or the great veneration they had for their God, but from the sloth and idleness they were addicted to.

Exodus 5:9

Ver. 9. Let there more work be laid upon the men,.... Instead of lessening it, let it be increased, or "be heavy" {k} upon them, that it may oppress and afflict them and keep them down, and weaken their strength and their spirits, and diminish them:

that they may labour therein; and have no leisure time to spend in idleness and sloth:

and let them not regard vain words; or "words of falsehood" {1} and lies, such as were spoken by Moses and Aaron, promising them liberty and deliverance from their bondage, which he was determined never to grant, and so eventually make such words to appear to be vain and empty, falsehood and lies.

{k} dbkt "aggravetur", Pagninus, Montanus, &c. {1} yrbdb "in verbis mendacii", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus. "Verbis falsis", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

Exodus 5:10

Ver. 10. And the taskmasters of the people went out,.... From the presence of Pharaoh, out of his court, to the respective places where they were set to see that the Israelites did their work:

and their officers; the officers of the Israelites, who were under the taskmasters, and answerable to them for the work of the people, and their tale of bricks:

and they spake to the people, saying, thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw; that is, any longer, as he had used to do.

Exodus 5:11

Ver. 11. Go ye, get ye straw, where you can find it,.... Before it was provided by the king, and brought to the brickkilns, but now they are bid to go and fetch it themselves, and get it where they could, whether in fields or barns; and if they were obliged to pay for it out of their labour; it was a greater oppression still:

yet not ought of your work shall be diminished; they were to do the same work, and make the same number of bricks, as when straw was brought and given them; and no allowance made for waste of time in seeking, or expenses in procuring straw, which was very hard upon them.

Exodus 5:12

Ver. 12. So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt,.... That part of it where they dwelt:

to gather stubble instead of straw; straw not being easy to come at, they were obliged to gather stubble that was left in the fields, after the corn was gathered in. Ben Melech observes, that the word signifies small straw, or small sticks of wood, and Kimchi {m}, and if so, this must be to burn the bricks with in the furnaces.

{m} Sepher Shorash, rad. vvq.

Exodus 5:13

Ver. 13. **And the taskmasters hastened them**, Kept them tight and close to their work, and were urgent on them to make quick dispatch of it:

saying, fulfil your works, [your] daily tasks, as when there was straw; they insisted upon it, that they did the same business at the brickkilns, made the same number of bricks every day, as they used to do when they had straw at hand. See [Ex 5:11](#).

Exodus 5:14

Ver. 14. **And the officers of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them**,.... This makes it clear, not only that the taskmasters and officers were different persons, but that the one were Egyptians appointed by Pharaoh, and the other were Israelites, of the better sort of them, who were set over the poorer sort by the taskmasters, to look after them, and take an account of their work, and the tale of their bricks, and give it in to the taskmasters; now these

were beaten by the taskmasters, either with a cane, stick, or cudgel, or with whips and scourges, because there was a deficiency in their accounts, and the full tale of bricks was not given in:

[and] demanded, wherefore have ye not fulfilled your task in making brick, both yesterday and today, as heretofore? the first day they were deficient they took no notice of it, did not call them to an account for it, but this being the case the second day, they not only expostulated with them about it, but beat them for it, which was hard usage. They had no need to ask them the reason of it, which they knew very well, and must be sensible that the men could not do the same work, and be obliged to spend part of their time in going about for straw or stubble; or the same number of men make the same tale of bricks, when some of them were employed to get straw for the rest, and to beat those officers for a deficiency through such means was cruel.

Exodus 5:15

Ver. 15. **Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried unto Pharaoh,....** Made their complaints to him, perhaps with tears in their eyes, being used so very ill. They little thought it was by Pharaoh's orders; they supposed he knew nothing of it, and therefore hoped to have their grievances redressed by him, but were mistaken:

saying, wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants? so they call themselves, they living in his country, and being under his jurisdiction, though not properly his subjects; however, he had made them his slaves, and so indeed even bondservants.

Exodus 5:16

Ver. 16. **There is no straw given unto thy servants,....** As used to be, which they supposed Pharaoh knew nothing of, and by which it appears that the order given by Pharaoh, [Ex 5:6](#) was not given in the hearing of the officers, only to the taskmasters, and by them to be made known to the officers, though indeed both are there mentioned, and both represent this to the people, [Ex 5:10](#)

and they say to us, make brick, though they had no straw to make or burn it with:

and, behold, thy servants are beaten; because the same number of bricks is not made as heretofore, but the fault is in thine own people; the taskmasters, who sent the people abroad to get straw or stubble themselves, and therefore could not make the same bricks as before; or "thy people sin" {n}, the guilt is theirs: or by thy people are meant the Israelites, whom they call Pharaoh's people to gain favour with him; and then the sense is, either "sin" is imputed "to thy people" {o}, the blame is laid upon them, or punishment is inflicted on them without cause, sin being often put for punishment; they are wrongfully charged with a fault, and wrongfully punished.

{n} Kme tajxw "et peccat populus tuns", Montanus, Drusius, Cartwright. {o} So Vatablus, Piscator, and some in Munster, Pagninus.

Exodus 5:17

Ver. 17. **But he said, ye are idle, ye are idle,....** Instead of expressing indignation at the taskmasters, and relieving the officers and the people, he insults them in a flouting

sarcastic way, charging them with sloth and idleness; and which, for the certainty of it, or, however, to show how strongly persuaded and fully assured he was of the truth of it, repeats it, and gives the following as a proof of it,

therefore ye say, let us go and do sacrifice to the Lord; suggesting that it was not so much the service and honour of God they regarded, as that they might have a leisure day from work and labour.

Exodus 5:18

Ver. 18. Go therefore now, and work,.... Go about your business, attend to your work, even you officers, as well as your people; work yourselves, as well as see that your people do theirs, and do not trouble me with such impertinent applications:

for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks; the usual number of bricks, as the Vulgate Latin version has it; though in [Ex 5:8](#), it is rendered in that version the measure of bricks, and so another word is translated by them, [Ex 5:14](#), and perhaps both may be intended, both number and measure; that is, that it was expected and insisted on that they delivered the full number of bricks they used to make, and these of full measure; for bricks were made of different measures, as Vitruvius {p} observes; some among the bricks were of two hands' breadth, others of four, and a third sort of five. See Gill on "Ex 5:7".

{p} Ut supra. (Vide Vitruvium de Architectura, l. 2. c. 3. p. 46)

Exodus 5:19

Ver. 19. And the officers of the children of Israel did see that they were in evil case,.... In a bad condition and circumstances, and that there was no likelihood of their getting out of them, since Pharaoh treated them after this manner; they saw not only that the common people were in a bad condition, in great bondage, misery, and distress, to be obliged to get straw to make brick, and carry in their full tale as before; but that they themselves were in a bad situation, since for the deficiency in their people they were like to be beaten for it from time to time:

after it was said, ye shall not minish ought from your bricks of your daily task; after this had been said and confirmed by Pharaoh, they had no hope of things being better with them, but looked upon their unhappy lot as irretrievable.

Exodus 5:20

Ver. 20. **And they met Moses and Aaron,**.... The officers of the children of Israel, who had been with their complaints to Pharaoh:

who stood in the way as they came forth from Pharaoh; they, had placed themselves in a proper situation, that they might meet them when they came out, and know what success they had, and which they were extremely desirous of hearing; by which they might judge in what temper Pharaoh was, and what they might for the future expect from him in consequence of their embassy.

Exodus 5:21

Ver. 21. **And they said unto them, the Lord look upon you and judge,**.... Or, "will look upon you and judge" {q}; and so it is either a prediction of what would be done to them, or an imprecation on them that God would take notice of their conduct, and punish them, or at least chastise them for acting the part they had, if not wickedly, yet imprudently:

because you have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh; or to "stink" {r}; they were become vile, abominable, and hateful to him, he could not bear the sight of them, and treated them as the filth and offscouring of all things; they had lost their good name, credit, and reputation with him; for leave being asked for them to go three days' journey into the wilderness, to offer sacrifice, and keep a feast, they were looked upon as a parcel of idle slothful fellows:

and in the eyes of his servants; not the taskmasters only, but his nobles, counsellors, and courtiers:

to put a sword in their hands to slay us; a proverbial expression, signifying that they by their conduct had exposed them to the utmost danger, and had given their enemies an occasion against them, and an opportunity of destroying their whole nation, under a pretence of disobedience and disloyalty. {q} jwpvyw-ary "videbit" "et judicabit", Rivet. {r} Mtvabh "fecisti foetere", V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Drusius. Exodus 5:22 Ver. 22. And Moses returned unto the Lord,.... Bishop Patrick thinks, that this not only intimates that the Lord had appeared to Moses since he came into Egypt, but that there was some settled place where he appeared, and where he might resort to him on all occasions, and therefore is said to return to him; though it may signify no more, than that, instead of staying to give an answer to the officers, which he might be at a loss to do, he went to God, to the throne of grace, by prayer, as

he was wont to do in cases of difficulty:and said, Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people? or afflicted them, and suffered them to be thus afflicted; which to ascribe to God was right, whatever were the means or instruments; for all afflictions are of him, and who has always wise reasons for what he does, as he now had; to try the faith and patience of his people; to make the Egyptians more odious to them, and so take them off from following their manners, customs, rites, and superstitions, and make them more desirous of departing from thence to the land of Canaan, nor seek a return to Egypt again; and that his vengeance on the Egyptians for such cruelty and inhumanity might appear the more just, and his power might be seen in the plagues he inflicted on them, and in the deliverance of his people when reduced to the utmost extremity:why is it that thou hast sent me? he seems to wish he had never been sent, and could be glad to be recalled, something of the same disposition still remaining in him as when first called; since no end was answered by his mission, no deliverance wrought, yea, the people were more afflicted and oppressed than before; and therefore he was at a loss how to account for it that he should be sent at all, seeing nothing came of it to the good of the people. Exodus 5:23 Ver. 23. For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name,... Had he come in his own name, it needed not be wondered at if he should not succeed, but coming in the name of God, it might have been expected he would, and that Pharaoh would have been prevailed upon, or obliged to use the people well, and let them go; but instead of that,he hath done evil to this people; afflicted and oppressed them more than ever: see Ex 5:7, &c.neither hast thou delivered thy people at all; there was not the least thing done towards their deliverance, their affliction was not at all mitigated, but increased: Moses expected that God would have made a beginning as soon as he had delivered his message to Pharaoh; that his mind would have been disposed in favour of the people, and he would have made their bondage lighter and easier, if he did not dismiss them at once; but, instead of that, more work was laid upon them, and their burdens were heavier: now this was a stumbling and a temptation to Moses, to wish he had never been sent; but if he had called to mind, which he seems to have forgotten, that Pharaoh would not let the people go at first, until all the wonders were wrought he had given him power to do, Ex 4:2 it would have relieved him, and removed his objections, and put a stop to his expostulation with God, who gives an answer to them in the following chapter, without expressing any displeasure at them.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 6:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 6

The Lord encourages Moses to hope for success from his name Jehovah, and the covenant he had made with the fathers of his people, [Ex 6:1](#), orders him to assure the children of Israel that he would deliver them from their bondage and burdens, and bring them into the land of Canaan; but through their distress and anguish they hearkened not to him, [Ex 6:6](#) but Moses is sent again to Pharaoh to demand the dismissal of Israel, to which he seems unwilling, and both he and Aaron are charged both to go to the children of Israel, and to Pharaoh, [Ex 6:10](#), next follows a genealogy of the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, which seems to be given for the sake of Moses and Aaron, and to show their descent, [Ex 6:14](#), who were the persons appointed of God to be the instruments of bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt, [Ex 6:26](#).

Ver. 1. **Then the Lord said unto Moses,**.... In answer to the questions put to him, and the expostulations made with him:

now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: in inflicting punishments on him: for with a strong hand shall he let them go; being forced to it by the mighty hand of God upon him; and it is by some rendered, "because of a strong hand" {s}; so Jarchi; for this is not to be understood of the hand of Pharaoh, but of the hand of God:

and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land: not only be willing that they should go, but be urgent upon them to be gone, [Ex 12:33](#).

{s} hqzx dyb "propter manum validam"; so some in Drusius.

[Exodus 6:2](#)

Ver. 2. **And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord.** Or Jehovah, the self-existent Being, the Being of beings, the everlasting I am, the unchangeable Jehovah, true, firm, and constant to his promises, ever to be believed, and always to be depended on.

Exodus 6:3

Ver. 3. **And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by [the name] of God Almighty,**.... Able to fulfil all his purposes, promises, and covenant, with whom nothing is impossible; or Elshaddai, God all-sufficient, who has a sufficiency of happiness in himself, and everything to supply the wants of his creatures in things temporal and spiritual, see [Ge 17:1](#):

but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them; which he had in the preceding verse called himself by. This is not to be understood absolutely; for it is certain that he had made himself known by this name, and this name was known unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,

[Ge 15:6](#), and but comparatively, as some think; that is, he was not so much made known to them by the one name as the other; though it may be questioned whether the one was more used in speaking to them than the other; wherefore others think, as Saadiah Gaon, that the word only is to be supplied, as in [Ge 32:28](#) and the sense to be, that by his name Jehovah he was not only made known to them, but by his name Elshaddai, and others also; and others reconcile the difficulty thus, that though the name Jehovah itself was known to the patriarchs, by which they were assured that God is eternal, immutable, and faithful to his promises; yet he was not known as to the efficacy of this name, or with respect to the actual performance of his promise, as he now would be by delivering the children of Israel out of Egypt, and bringing them into the land of Canaan; though perhaps, by reading the words with an interrogation, the clause will appear more plain, "and by my name Jehovah was I not known to them?" {t} verily I was. Josephus {u} says, this name was not before made known to men, and that it was not lawful for a man to speak it; and this is the common notion of the Jews, that it is ineffable, and not lawful to be pronounced, and therefore they put Adonai and Elohim in the room of it, and the vowel points of these words to it, which is a false and superstitious notion: this name was known among the Heathens; it is the same with iaw in the oracle of Apollo {w}; and Diodorus Siculus {x} says, that with the Jews Moses is said to give laws from a God called "IAO", and is the same which in Philo Byblius {y} is called Jevo; and both are no other than a corruption of Jah or Jehovah; and perhaps the tetraktuv of the Pythagoreans {z}, by which they swore, is the same with the tetragrammaton, or this word of four letters, with the Jews.

{t} Vid. Noldium, No. 788. {u} Antiqu. l. 2. c. 12. sect. 4. {w} Cornelius Labeo de oraculo Apoll. Clarii apud Macrobi. Saturnal. l. 1. c. 18. {x} Bibliothoc. l. 1. p. 84. {y} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 1. c. 9. p. 31. {z} Carmin. Aurea Pythagor. l. 47. & Hierocles in ib. p. 225, 277. Porphy. de Vita Pythagor. p. 189.

Exodus 6:4

Ver. 4. **And I have also established my covenant with them**,.... With Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and with their posterity, so that it is sure and firm, and shall never be made null and void:

to give them the land of Canaan; or to their children, which were as themselves:

the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers; not being in actual possession of any part of it, but lived as pilgrims and strangers in it, as their posterity now did in another land not theirs; see [Heb 11:9](#).

Exodus 6:5

Ver. 5. **And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel**,.... For the Lord is not only the eternal and immutable Being in his purposes and promises, and a covenant keeping God; but he is compassionate and merciful, and sympathizes with his people in all their afflictions; he takes notice of their sighs and groans, as he now did those of his people in Egypt:

whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and which was the reason of their groaning; their bondage being so hard and rigorous, in which they were detained by Pharaoh, who refused to let them go, though Moses in the name of the Lord had required him to do it:

and I have remembered my covenant; concerning bringing them out of Egypt into the land of Canaan, which he would quickly do, and thereby make it appear he was mindful of his covenant, which is indeed never forgotten by him, though it may seem to be.

Exodus 6:6

Ver. 6. **Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord**,.... Eternal in his being, immutable in his counsels, faithful to his covenant, and able to fulfil it;

and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians; which lay heavy on them, and made them sigh and groan:

and I will rid you out of their bondage; in which they were kept, and by which their

lives were made bitter:

and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm; with an arm stretched out from heaven to earth, as Aben Ezra expresses it; even by the exertion of his almighty power, openly and manifestly displayed in the lighting down of his arm upon the enemies of his people, and in delivering them out of their hands:

and with great judgments; upon the Egyptians, by many and sore plagues and punishments inflicted on them.

Exodus 6:7

Ver. 7. And I will take you to me for a people,.... Out of the hands of the Egyptians, and out of their country, to be in a political sense his kingdom and subjects; and in a religious sense a holy people to himself, to fear, serve, worship, and glorify him, by walking according to laws and rules given them by him; and this he did by setting up and establishing a civil and ecclesiastical polity among them:

and I will be to you a God; their King and their God to rule over them, protect and defend them, they being a theocracy; and their covenant God and Father, giving them various spiritual privileges, the adoption, the glory, the covenant, the law, service, and promises:

and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God; by the promises fulfilled, the favours granted, and the deliverances wrought for them:

which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians; see the preceding verse [Ex 6:6](#).

Exodus 6:8

Ver. 8. And I will bring you in unto the land,.... The land of Canaan:

concerning the which I did swear; or lift up my hand {a}, which was a gesture used in swearing, [Ge 14:22](#)

to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; see [Ex 6:4](#):

and I will give it you for an heritage; to be possessed as an inheritance by them, so

long as they were obedient to his will, or until the Messiah came:

I am the Lord; whose counsels of old are faithfulness and truth; whose promises are yea and amen; whose gifts and calling are without repentance; and who is able also to perform whatever he has said he will do.

{a} ydy ta ytavn "levavi manum meam", Pagninus, Montanus, Munster.

Exodus 6:9

Ver. 9. **And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel**,.... After this manner, and in the above words, declaring all that the Lord made known to him, and promised to do for them; which one would have thought would have revived their spirits, and refreshed and comforted their hearts under their troubles, and encouraged a lively exercise of faith and hope of deliverance:

but they hearkened not unto Moses; being disappointed of deliverance by him, and their afflictions being increased, and lying heavy upon them, they were heartless and hopeless;

for anguish of spirit; trouble of mind and grief of heart, with which they were swallowed up; or "for shortness of breath" {b}, being so pressed that they could hardly breathe, and so were incapable of attending to what was spoken to them:

and for cruel bondage; under which they laboured, and from which they had scarce any respite, and saw no way of deliverance from it.

{b} xwr ruqm "ob brevem anhelitum", Munster.

Exodus 6:10

Ver. 10. **And the Lord spake unto Moses**,.... At another time, and renewed his orders to him to go again to Pharaoh, and require their dismissal:

saying; as follows:

Exodus 6:11

Ver. 11. **Go in**,.... Into Pharaoh's palace, and into his presence, to whom access seems not to be very difficult; and perhaps access to princes was not attended with so much ceremony then as it now is:

speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt; though a king, and a king of so large a country as Egypt, yet do not be afraid to speak to him; speak to him plainly and boldly, not in a supplicatory, but in an authoritative way, in the name of the King of kings:

that he let the children of Israel go out of his land; this demand had been made before, but was rejected with an haughty air, and now it is repeated, before the Lord proceeds to punish him for his disobedience, that his judgments upon him might appear more manifestly to be just and right.

Exodus 6:12

Ver. 12. **And Moses spake before the Lord**,.... Who appeared in a visible form, and had spoke to him with an articulate voice, and before whom Moses stood, and made the following reply:

saying, behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; even though he brought a comfortable message to them from the Lord, and delivered many gracious promises of his to them, assuring them of deliverance out of Egypt, and of their possession of the land of Canaan:

how then shall Pharaoh hear me? making a demand upon him to part with a people, from whose labour he receives so much advantage, and has such an addition to his revenues, and who is a mighty king, and haughty monarch. And this is further enforced from his own weakness and unfitness to speak to Pharaoh:

who [am] of uncircumcised lips? had an impediment in his speech, could not speak freely and readily, but with difficulty; perhaps stammered, and so uttered superfluous syllables, repeated them before he could fully pronounce what he aimed at; or in other words, he was not eloquent, which was his old objection, and had been fully answered before: and by this it appears that there was no alteration in the speech of Moses since God spoke with him at Mount Horeb. Some think Moses expected to have had this impediment removed, and tacitly hints at it here, not being so well satisfied with Aaron's being joined with him as his mouth and spokesman, which seemed to carry in it some reflection upon him.

Exodus 6:13

Ver. 13. **And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron,**.... No notice is taken of the objection of Moses, having been sufficiently answered before, and Aaron is joined with him in the following charge:

and gave them a charge unto the children of Israel, and unto Pharaoh king of Egypt; that is, to go to the children of Israel and comfort them, and direct them what they should do, and how they should behave under their present circumstances; assuring them of deliverance, and to go to Pharaoh, and to make a fresh demand upon him to let Israel go; and in this work they had a solemn charge from God to continue, and not to desist from it, until they had finished it:

to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; which they were to be the instruments of: and that it might be known clearly from whom they descended, who had such a charge given them, and such honour put upon them, the following genealogy is recorded.

Exodus 6:14

Ver. 14. **These be the heads of their father's houses,**.... Not of the families of Moses and Aaron, but of the children of Israel, though only the heads of three tribes are mentioned; and some think that these three are taken notice of, to show that they were not rejected of God, though they seem to be rather cursed than blessed by Jacob; and that though they were guilty of very great crimes, as Reuben of incest, and Simeon and Levi of murder, yet they truly repented, and obtained mercy of God, and were honoured in their offspring, of whom an account is here given; but the two first seem to be taken notice of for the sake of the third, and that order might be observed, and that it might plainly appear that the deliverers of Israel were Israelites:

the sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel, Hanoah, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi; whose names, and the order in which they are put, are the same as in [Ge 46:9](#) these be the families of Reuben; the heads of them, or from whence they sprung.

Exodus 6:15

Ver. 15. **And the sons of Simeon, Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman,**....

See Gill on "Ge 46:10"

these are the families of Simeon; who gave rise and name to the several families of that tribe now in Egypt.

Exodus 6:16

Ver. 16. And these are the names of the sons of Levi, according to their generations,.... Whose sons, according to the order of their birth, were as follow:

Gershom, and Kohath, and Merari; see [Ge 46:11](#):

and the years of the life of Levi were one hundred and thirty seven years; and exactly the same number of years is assigned him by Polyhistor from Demetrius {c}, an Heathen writer. Jarchi says, that the reason why, the years of the life of Levi are reckoned is to show how long the bondage lasted; for there was no servitude as long as any of the tribes (or of the sons of Jacob) remained, according to [Ex 1:6](#) and the Jewish chronologers {d} affirm that Levi was the last of the patriarchs that died; and that he died in the year of the world 3332, and lived in Egypt ninety four years; and from his time, to the going out of Egypt, were only one hundred and sixteen years; and they further say the bondage could not last longer than one hundred and sixteen years, nor shorter than eighty seven. Bishop Usher {e} places his death in A. M. 2385, and before Christ 1619: according to the Targum of Jonathan, he lived to see Moses and Aaron the deliverers of Israel; but that is false, since Joseph and all his brethren died before Moses was born, [Ex 1:6](#).

{c} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 21. p. 425. {d} Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 5. 1. Tzemach David, par. 1, fol. 6. 2. & 7. 1. Seder Olam Rabba, c. 3. p. 9. {e} Annales Vet. Test. p. 17.

Exodus 6:17

Ver. 17. And the sons of Gershom, Libni, and Shimi, according to their families. He had only two sons, from whom came the families of the Libnites and Shimites; see Nu 3:21. Exodus 6:18 Ver. 18. And the sons of Kohath, Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel,.... So they are reckoned in 1Ch 6:18 though only the family of the Hebronites are mentioned in Nu 26:58 and the years of the life of Kohath were one hundred and thirty three years. A Jewish chronologer says {f} he died one hundred years before the going out of Egypt: just the same number of years is ascribed to him by Polyhistor from Demetrius, an Heathen historian {g}. {f} Shalshalet Hakabalaut, ut

supra. (fol. 5. 1.) {g} Apud Euseb. ut supra. (Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 21. p. 425.) Exodus 6:19 Ver. 19. And the sons of Merari, Mahali, and Mushi,.... From whence sprung the families of the Mahalites, and Mushites, Nu 3:33: these are the families of Levi, according to their generations: the families that descended from him and his sons, according to the order of their birth. Exodus 6:20 Ver. 20. And Amram took him Jochebed his father's sister to wife,.... This Amram was the first son of Kohath, and the father of Moses, as after related, and so must be the same with the man of the house of Levi, and his wife the daughter of Levi, as in Ex 2:1 and though such a marriage was afterwards prohibited, Moses does not conceal it, though it may seem to reflect some dishonour on him and his family; he writing not for his own glory, but for the sake of truth, and the good of mankind, and especially the church and people of God. Indeed the Vulgate Latin version, and the Septuagint, Samaritan, and Syriac versions, make her to be his first cousin, the daughter of his father's brother, his uncle's daughter: and so does Polyhistor from Demetrius {h}; but in Nu 26:59, she is expressly said to be a daughter of Levi, born to him in Egypt, and therefore must be his father's sister: and she bare him Aaron and Moses: and Miriam also, though not mentioned, it being for the sake of these two that the genealogy is made: and the years of the life of Amram were one hundred and thirty seven years: just the age of his grandfather Levi, Ex 6:16. A Jewish chronologer {i} says he died in the thirtieth year of Moses: but the Arabic writers {k} say in the fifty sixth or fifty seventh, and at the end of A. M. 3810. Polyhistor {l} from Demetrius makes his age to be one hundred and thirty six, and him to be the father of Moses and Aaron, and Aaron to be three years older than Moses, exactly according to the Scripture account. {h} Apud Euseb. ut supra. (Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 21. p. 425.) {i} Shalshalet Hakabala, ut supra. (fol. 5. 1.) {k} Patricides, p. 26. Elmacinus, p. 46. apud Hottinger. Smegma Oriental. l. 1. c. 8. p. 392. {l} Apud Euseb. ut supra. Exodus 6:21 Ver. 21. And the sons of Izhar, Korah, and Nepheg, and Zichri. These seem to be mentioned for the sake of Korah, concerning whom is a remarkable history in the following book; for the other two are nowhere else spoken of. Exodus 6:22 Ver. 22. And the sons of Uzziel, Mishael, and Elzaphan, and Zichri. The two first of these were the men that were ordered by Moses to carry out of the camp the two sons of Aaron, who were killed by lightning for offering strange fire, Le 10:4. Exodus 6:23 Ver. 23. And Aaron took him Elisheba,.... The same name we pronounce Elizabeth; and of this name was the wife of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, Lu 1:5, this woman Aaron took was the daughter of Amminadab, the sister of Naashon; a prince of the tribe of Judah, Nu 7:12, her he took to wife; or married; for though intermarriages with the several tribes were not allowed, nor used in after times, that they might be kept distinct, and the inheritances also, yet the tribe of Levi often took wives of other tribes, because they had no inheritance, and were to have none in the land of Canaan, so that confusion in tribes and inheritance was not made hereby; and it is observable, that these marriages were frequently with the tribe of Judah, as signifying the union of the kingly and priestly

offices in Christ, who sprung from the tribe of Judah:and she bare him Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar; the two first of these died by fire from heaven in their father's lifetime, for offering strange fire to the Lord, Le 10:1. Eleazar succeeded his father in the priesthood, Nu 20:26 and of the sons of Ithamar executing the priest's office, see 1Ch 24:2. Exodus 6:24Ver. 24. And the sons of Korah,.... The eldest son of Izhar, who, though he proved a bad man, yet many of his posterity were good men, and are often mentioned in general in the titles of some of the psalms of David: the immediate sons of Korah were Assir, and Elkanah, and Abiasaph. Aben Ezra says, that Samuel the prophet was of the sons of Korah; perhaps what might lead him to it was, because his father's name was Elkanah, the name of one of these sons of Korah, but cannot be this Elkanah:these are the families of the Korhites; the heads of them, or from whom they descended. Exodus 6:25Ver. 25. And Eleazar Aaron's son took him one of the daughters of Putiel to wife,.... This was Aaron's eldest son. The person, whose daughter he married, Dr. Lightfoot {m} conjectures was an Egyptian convert, perhaps of the posterity of Potipherah, among whom Joseph had sowed the seeds of true religion, and supposes that the Egyptians used the name of Puti or Poti, either in memorial of their uncle Put, Ge 10:6 or in reverence of some deity of that name; but the Targum of Jonathan makes Putiel to be the same with Jethro; and so does Jarchi; but Aben Ezra seems to be most right, who takes him to be of the children of Israel, though the reason of his name is not known, and the daughter of such an one it is most likely a son of Aaron would marry:and she bore him Phinehas; of whom see Nu 25:11:these are the heads of the Levites, according to their families; from whence the Levites sprung, and their several families. It may be observed, that Moses says nothing of his own offspring, only of his brother Aaron's, partly out of modesty and humility, and partly because the priesthood was successive in the family of Aaron, but not the civil government in the family of Moses; and that he proceeds no further to give the genealogy of the remaining tribes, his chief view being to show the descent of Aaron and himself, that it might be with certainty known in after times who they were that were instruments of Israel's deliverance out of Egypt, which would be matter of inquiry, and very desirable to be known. {m} Works, vol. 1. p. 704, 705. Exodus 6:26Ver. 26. These are that Aaron and Moses,.... Aaron is set before Moses, because he was the eldest, and because he prophesied in Egypt before Moses, as Aben Ezra observes; though Moses was greater in dignity than he, and therefore the true reason may be the modesty of Moses; though in a following verse Moses is set before Aaron, to show that they were equal, as Jarchi thinks; and perhaps the thing was quite an indifference to the historian, and done without any care and intention, however these words are emphatically expressed, on purpose to point out the persons to future ages:to whom the Lord said, bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt: which is the charge he gave them both, Ex 6:13, and the account of which is returned to again, after an interruption by the genealogy before recorded: Israel were to be brought out,according to their armies; denoting their numbers, and the order in which

they were to march out of Egypt, as they did, not by flight, nor in confusion, but in a formidable manner, and in great composure and order, with these two men, Moses and Aaron, as their generals at the head of them. Exodus 6:27 Ver. 27. These are they which spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt,.... In the name of the Lord of hosts; and demanded the dismissal of Israel, in order to bring the children of Israel from Egypt; nor did they desist making application to him, until they had prevailed upon him to let them go: these are that Moses and Aaron; which is repeated, that it may be observed who were the deliverers of Israel, what their names, of what tribe they were, and from whom they descended, and who sprung from them, at least from Aaron. Exodus 6:28 Ver. 28. And it came to pass on the day when the Lord spake unto Moses in the land of Egypt. This verse depends upon the following for the sense of it, which shows what it was the Lord said to Moses in the day he spake to him in Egypt, when he was come thither, which is as follows: Exodus 6:29 Ver. 29. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, I am the Lord,.... See Ex 6:2: speak thou unto Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say unto thee; that he let Israel go; and that in case of refusal, that he would punish him and his people with this and the other plague, one after another, and at last slay him and their firstborn. Exodus 6:30 Ver. 30. And Moses said before the Lord, behold, I am of uncircumcised lips,.... As he had done, Ex 6:13, and this is only a repetition of what is there said, in order to lead on to what is related in the following chapter: how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me? so mean a person, and so poor a speaker, and he a mighty king, surrounded with wise counsellors and eloquent orators.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 7:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 7

Moses and Aaron are ordered to go to Pharaoh, and require the dismissal of the people of Israel, but they are told before hand that Pharaoh's heart would be hardened, and would refuse to let them go, until the hand of the Lord was stretched out, and great judgments were brought down upon, Egypt, and then they should come forth, [Ex 7:1](#), which orders Moses and Aaron obeyed, and their age is observed, when this was done, [Ex 7:6](#) and they are bid to work a miracle, when Pharaoh should demand one, by turning a rod into a serpent, which they did; but Pharaoh's magicians doing the same in appearance, his heart was hardened, [Ex 7:8](#) and then they are directed to meet him at the river, and require the same as before; and if he refused, to smite the waters of the river with the rod, and turn them into blood, which they did, [Ex 7:15](#), but Pharaoh's magicians doing the same by enchantments, he did not regard it, though the plague lasted seven days, [Ex 7:22](#).

Ver. 1. **And the Lord said unto Moses,**.... In answer to his objection, taken from his own meanness, and the majesty of Pharaoh, and from his want of readiness and freedom of expression:

see; take notice of, observe what I am about to say:

I have made thee a god to Pharaoh; not a god by nature, but made so; he was so by commission and office, clothed with power and authority from God to act under him in all things he should direct; not for ever, as angels are gods, but for a time; not in an ordinary way, as magistrates are gods, but in an extraordinary manner; and not to any other but to Pharaoh, being an ambassador of God to him, and as in his room and stead to, rule over him, though so great a monarch; to command him what he should do, and control him when he did wrong, and punish him for his disobedience, and inflict such plagues upon him, and do such miracles before him, as no mere man of himself, and none but God can do; and even exercise the power of life and death, as in the slaying of the firstborn, that Pharaoh should stand in as much fear of him, as if he was a deity, and apply to him to remove the plagues upon him, as if he was one:

and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet; to declare the will of God revealed to him by Moses from the Lord; so that this seems to be more than to be the mouth and spokesman of Moses and interpreter and explainer of his words, or to be acting the part of an orator for him; for Moses in this affair being God's viceregent, and

furnished with a knowledge of the mind and will of God respecting it, as well as with power to work miracles, and inflict plagues, was made a god to both Pharaoh and Aaron; see [Ex 4:6](#) to Pharaoh in the sense before explained, and to Aaron, he being his prophet, to whom he communicated the secrets of God, and his will and pleasure, in order to make the same known to Pharaoh. Thus highly honoured was Moses to be a god to a sovereign prince, and to have Aaron to be his prophet.

[Exodus 7:2](#)

Ver. 2. **Thou shalt speak all that I command thee**,.... That is, to Aaron his prophet, whatever the Lord made known to him in a private manner as his will to be done:

and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh; whatsoever should be told him by Moses, as from the Lord:

that he send the children of Israel out of his land; this was the principal thing to be insisted upon; and all that was said or done to him was to bring about this end, the dismissal of the children of Israel out of Egypt.

[Exodus 7:3](#)

Ver. 3. **And I will harden Pharaoh's heart**,....
See Gill on "Ex 4:21"

and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt; work one miracle and wonderful sign after another, until they are all wrought intended to be wrought; and which he had given Moses power to do, and until the end should be answered and obtained, the letting go of the children of Israel.

[Exodus 7:4](#)

Ver. 4. **But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you**,.... Regard not what they said, nor answer the demand they made, or obey the command of God delivered by them to him: this the Lord apprised them of, that they might not be discouraged, and conclude their labour would be in vain, their attempts fruitless, and they should never gain their point, but spend their time, and expose themselves to danger to no purpose:

that I may lay mine hand upon Egypt; the inhabitants of Egypt, smiting them with one

plague after another, and particularly with the last, slaying their firstborn; every plague was a stroke of his hand, and an effect of his mighty power and vengeance, and more especially that:

and bring forth mine armies; the children of Israel consisting of 600,000 men, besides women and children, [Ex 12:37](#) which, divided into twelve tribes, made twelve fine armies, 50,000 men in a tribe or army upon an average:

and my people the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; the word "and" need not be supplied; if any supplement is necessary, the word "even" would be better, since this clause is added by way of explanation, showing who are meant by the armies of the Lord, his people to be brought out:

by great judgments; inflicted upon the Egyptians.

[Exodus 7:5](#)

Ver. 5. **And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord**,.... Jehovah, the one only true and living God; this they should know by the judgments executed upon them, and be obliged to acknowledge it:

when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt: especially the last time, to destroy the firstborn:

and bring out the children of Israel from among them; by which it would appear that he was mightier than they, and obtained the end for which the plagues were inflicted on them.

[Exodus 7:6](#)

Ver. 6. **And Moses and Aaron did as the Lord commanded them**,.... After this they never showed any reluctance, or made any objection to any message they were sent with, or any work they were ordered to do, but went about it at once, and performed it with all readiness and cheerfulness:

so did they; which is not a superfluous and redundant expression, but very emphatic, showing with what care and diligence they did every thing, and how exactly they conformed in all things to the divine will.

Exodus 7:7

Ver. 7. **And Moses was eighty years old**,.... At this time, which is observed partly to show how long Israel had been afflicted in Egypt; for their great troubles and miseries began about the time of the birth of Moses, or a little before, as appears from the above history; and partly to show the patience and forbearance of God with the Egyptians, and how just and righteous were his judgments on them; with this perfectly agrees Stephen's account of the age of Moses, [Ac 7:23](#) and Aaron eighty three years old, when they spake unto Pharaoh; so that they were men that had had a large experience of things, and had been long training up for the service designed to be done by them; they were men of wisdom and prudence, of sedate and composed countenances, and fit to appear before a king, whose age and venerable aspect might command attention to them. Aben Ezra observes, that

"in all the Scripture there is no mention of any prophets that prophesied in their old age but these, because their excellency was greater than all the prophets."

By this it appears that Aaron was three years older than Moses. A Jewish chronologer says {n}, that it is affirmed in an exposition of theirs, that Aaron prophesied to the Israelites in Egypt eighty years, which is making him to be a very young prophet when he first entered into the office. The Arabic writers {o} say, Miriam was at this time eighty seven, so was seven years older than Moses, and four years older than Aaron; see [Ex 2:4](#).

{n} Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 7. 1. {o} Patricides, p. 26. apud Hottinger. p. 415.

Exodus 7:8

Ver. 8. **And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron**,.... After he had given them their commission, and instructions to go to Pharaoh, and a little before they went in to him:

saying, as follows.

Exodus 7:9

Ver. 9. **When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, show a miracle for you**,.... To prove that they came from God, the Jehovah they said they did, and that they were his

ambassadors, and came in his name, and made the demand for him; which when he seriously reflected on things, he would be ready to require, hoping they would not be able to show any, and then he should have somewhat against them, and treat them as impostors:

then thou shalt say unto Aaron, take thy rod; the same that Moses had in his hand at Horeb, and brought with him to Egypt; this he had delivered into the hand of Aaron, who was to be his agent, and with this rod do signs and wonders as he did, and on account of them it is sometimes called the rod of God:

and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent; as it became one before at Horeb, when Moses by the order of God cast it on the ground, and afterwards became a rod again, as it now was, [Ex 4:2](#) Hence Mercury, the messenger of the gods with the Heathens, is represented as having a "caduceus", a rod or wand twisted about with snakes {p}.

{p} Vid. Chartar. de Imag. Deorum, p. 136. imag. 48.

Exodus 7:10

Ver. 10. And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh,.... Into the palace of Pharaoh boldly, and with intrepidity, clothed with such power and authority, and assured of success;

and they did as the Lord had commanded; they demanded in his name the dismissal of the children of Israel, and upon his requiring a miracle to confirm their mission, wrought one as follows:

and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and it became a serpent: or a "dragon", as the Septuagint version; this word is sometimes used of great whales, [Ge 1:21](#) and of the crocodile, [Eze 29:3](#) and it is very likely the crocodile is meant here, as Dr. Lightfoot {q} thinks; since this was frequent in the Nile, the river of Egypt, where the Hebrew infants had been cast, and into whose devouring jaws they fell, and which also was an Egyptian deity {r}. Though no mention is made of Pharaoh's demanding a miracle, yet no doubt he did, as the Lord had intimated he would, and without which it can hardly be thought it would be done; and Artapanus {s}, an Heathen writer, expressly asserts it; for he says,

"when the king required of Moses to do some sign or wonder, the rod which he had he cast down, and it became a serpent, to the amazement of all, and then took it by its tail

and it be came a rod again;"

which is a testimony from an Heathen of the truth of this miracle.

{q} Works, vol. 1. p. 702. {r} Crocodylen adorant, Juvenal, Sat. 15. {s} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. 1. 9. c. 27. p. 435.

Exodus 7:11

Ver. 11. **Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers,**.... The cunning men and wizards, a sort of jugglers and deceivers, who pretended to great knowledge of things, to discover secrets, tell fortunes, and predict things to come, and by legerdemain tricks, and casting a mist before people's eyes, pretended to do very wonderful and amazing things; and therefore Pharaoh sent for these, to exercise their art and cunning, and see if they could not vie with Moses and Aaron:

now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments; or by their secret wiles and juggles, making things seem to appear to the sight when they did not really, but by dazzling the eyes of men by their wicked and diabolical art, they fancied they saw things which they did not; for the word has the signification of flames of fire, or of a flaming sword, or lance, which being brandished to and fro dazzles the sight. The Targum of Jonathan gives the names of two of these magicians, whom he calls Jannes and Jambres, as does the apostle, See Gill on "2Ti 3:8". Josephus {t} calls these magicians of Egypt priests, and Artapanus {u} says, they were priests that lived about Memphis. According to the Arabs {w}, the name of the place where they lived was Ausana, a city very ancient and pleasant, called the city of the magicians, which lay to the east of the Nile: their name in the Hebrew language is either from a word which signifies a style, or greying tool, as Fuller {x} thinks, because in their enchantments they used superstitious characters and figures; or, as Saadiah Gaon {y}, from two words, the one signifying a "hole", and the other "stopped"; because they bored a hole in a tree to put witchcrafts into it, and stopped it up, and then declared what should be, or they had to say.

{t} Antiqu. 1. 2. c. 13. sect. 3. {u} Apud Euseb. ut supra. (Praepar. Evangel. 1. 9. c. 27. p. 435.) {w} Arab. Geograph. Climat. 2. par. 4. lin. 21. {x} Miscell. Sacr. 1. 5. c. 11. {y} Comment. in Dan. i. 20.

Exodus 7:12

Ver. 12. **For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents**,.... That is, they seemed to be so, as Josephus {z} expresses it, but not really, in which he is followed by many; though some think that the devil assisted in this affair, and in an instant, as soon as the rods were cast down, removed them and put real serpents in their room:

but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods; that is, the serpent that Aaron's rod was turned into, swallowed up the rods of the magicians, which never were otherwise than rods only in appearance; or if real serpents were put in the room of them, these were devoured by his serpent called his rod, because it was before turned into a serpent, as Aben Ezra observes; though the Targums of Jonathan, Jarchi, and R. Jeshua, suppose this was done after the serpent became a rod again; which makes the miracle the greater and more wonderful, that a rod should devour other rods; and supposing them real serpents, this was what the magicians could not make their rods do, and in which they were outdone by Aaron.

{z} Antiqu. ut supra. (l. 2. c. 13 sect. 3.)

Exodus 7:13

Ver. 13. **And he hardened Pharaoh's heart**,.... Or, "notwithstanding the heart of Pharaoh was hardened" {a}; though he saw the rods of his magicians devoured by rod; or "therefore" {b} his heart was hardened, because he saw that the rods of his magicians became serpents as well as Aaron's; in which there was a deception of sight, and which was suffered for the hardening of his heart, there being other wonders and miracles to be wrought, for showing forth the divine power, before Israel must be let go:

that he hearkened not unto them; to Moses and Aaron, and comply with their demand, to dismiss the people of Israel:

as the Lord had said; or foretold he would not.

{a} qzxyw "attamen obfirmatum est", Junius & Tremellius. {b} "Itaque", Piscator.

Exodus 7:14

Ver. 14. **And the Lord said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart is hardened**,.... Or "heavy" {c}, dull and stupid, stiff and inflexible, cannot lift up his heart, or find in his heart to

obey the will of God:

he refuseth to let the people go; which was an instance and proof of the hardness and heaviness of his heart, on which the above miracle had made no impression, to regard what God by his ambassadors had required of him.

{c} dbk "grave", Montanus, Drusius. So Ainsworth.

Exodus 7:15

Ver. 15. **Get thee unto Pharaoh in the morning**,.... The next morning, a time in which the mind is most composed and sedate, and fit to attend to what may be suggested:

lo, he goeth out unto the water; the river Nile, either to take his morning's walk, and to refresh himself at the waterside, as the Jerusalem Targum; or to observe divinations upon the water, as a magician, as the Targum of Jonathan. So in the Talmud {d} it is said, that the Pharaoh in the days of Moses was a magician. Or rather, as Aben Ezra thinks, which he says is a custom of the kings of Egypt to this day, to go out in the months of Tammuz and Ab, i.e. June, and July, when the river increases, to observe how many degrees it has ascended, by which the fruitfulness of the ensuing season was judged of. See Gill on "Amos 8:8" Or else he went to worship the rising sun, or the Nile, to pay his morning devotions to it: for not only Jarchi, and other Jewish writers, say it was their chief god, but Plutarch {e} also affirms, that nothing was so much honoured with the Egyptians as the Nile; and both Theodoret on this place, and Athanasius {f} elsewhere says, that they reckoned it a god, and worshipped it as such; and it has been usual with other nations to worship rivers, as Aelianus {g} reports:

and thou shall stand by the river's brink against he come; over against the brink of the river Nile, in order to meet him:

and the rod which was turned to a serpent shalt thou take in thine hand; as a terror to Pharaoh, on sight of which he might be put in mind of what had been done, and by means of which he might fear other wonders would be wrought; by this it appears, that after the rod had been turned into a serpent, it became a rod again, as it did at Horeb, [Ex 4:4](#). Moses having previous notice of all this, shows the prescience of God, and his certain knowledge of future contingent events.

{d} T. Bab. Moed. Katon, fol. 18. 1. {e} De Iside & Osir. Vide Philo de Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 617. {f} Contr. Gentil p. 20. & de Incarnatione, p. 73. {g} Var. Hist. l. 2. c. 33.

Exodus 7:16

Ver. 16. **And thou shalt say unto him**,.... Upon meeting him:

the Lord God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee; still appearing in the character of the ambassador of Jehovah, the God of the children of Israel:

saying, let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness; the demand is once more renewed, before any punishment is inflicted for refusal, that the patience and forbearance of God might be the more visible, and his judgments appear the more righteous when inflicted, as well as Pharaoh be left more inexcusable. The reason of the demand is observed,

that they may serve me; keep a feast, and sacrifice to him, as is before expressed, and the place where is pointed at:

in the wilderness; at Sinai, in Arabia, where were the mountains of Sinai and Horeb; but the time of their service is not here expressed, as elsewhere, namely, three days:

and, behold, hitherto thou wouldest not hear; and obey the voice of the Lord, upbraiding him with his disobedience, and the hardness of his heart; but signifying it was not now too late, though it was advisable to be quick, or the blow would be given, and the plagues inflicted.

Exodus 7:17

Ver. 17. **Thus saith the Lord, in this thou shalt know that I am the Lord**,.... By the following instance of his power and vengeance:

behold, I will smite with the rod that is in my hand; which though in the hand of Moses, [Ex 7:18](#) yet he being his ambassador, and representing him, is said to be in the hand of the Lord; and with this he threatens to smite

upon the waters which are in the river; the river Nile, and the canals thereof:

and they shall be turned to blood; and if this river was their god, it would abundantly appear that the God of the Hebrews was Jehovah, and above all gods, and particularly above theirs.

Exodus 7:18

Ver. 18. **And the fish that is in the river shall die**,.... Their element being changed, and they not able to live in any other but water:

and the river shall stink; with the blood, into which it should be congealed, and with the putrefied bodies of fishes floating in it:

and the Egyptians shall loath to drink of the water of the river; the very colour of it, looking like blood, would set them against it, and create a nausea in them; or "shall be weary" {h}, tired of drinking it in a little time, through the loathsomeness of it; or be weary in digging about it, [Ex 7:24](#) to get some clear water to drink of; or in seeking to find out ways and methods to cure the waters, that so they might be fit to drink of, as Jarchi interprets it.

{h} waln "delassabuntur", Tigurine version, Vatablus. "Defatigabuntur", Cartwright.

Exodus 7:19

Ver. 19. **And the Lord spake unto Moses**,.... Pharaoh still being obstinate, and refusing to let the people go:

say unto Aaron, take thy rod, and stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt; upon all of them in general, what were in the river Nile, or derived from it, as follows:

upon their streams; the seven streams of the river Nile, See Gill on "Isa 11:15". upon their rivers; the canals that were cut out of the river Nile, for the watering of their fields and gardens, for they had no other river: and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of waters; which were dug near the river, or to which pipes were laid to convey the water thither: that they may become blood; and so not fit to drink: and that there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood, and in vessels of stone; in which water were kept in private houses, fetched from the river for the use of families; all which were to be turned into blood everywhere, in all parts of the land, and in all places mentioned, immediately upon Aaron's taking his rod, and smiting the waters with it in that part of the river that was before him. Exodus 7:20 Ver. 20. And Moses and Aaron did so, as the Lord commanded,.... Moses delivered the rod to Aaron, who took it and went to the water side: and he lift up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river; or "in that river" {i}, the river Nile, on the brink of which Pharaoh then stood: in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; his

nobles and courtiers who tended him in his walk to the water; for this was done before he returned to his palace:and all the waters that were in the river were turned into blood; not only the face of the waters looked like blood, but they were really turned into it; and not only the surface of the water, but all the water that was in the river, wherever it flowed, and as far as it flowed in the land of Egypt. {i} rayb en tw potamw Sept. "in eo rivo", Junius and Tremellius, Piscator. Exodus 7:21 Ver. 21. And the fish that was in the river died,.... Which was a full proof that the conversion of it into blood was real; for had it been only in appearance, or the water of the river had only the colour of blood, and looked like it, but was not really so, it would not have affected the fishes, they would have lived as well as before; and this plague was the greater affliction to the Egyptians, not as it affected their drink but their food, fish Nu 11:5 being what the common people chiefly lived upon, See Gill on "Isa 19:8" and the river stunk; the blood into which it was turned being corrupted through the heat of the sun, and the dead fishes swimming upon it being putrefied;and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river; and they had no other water to drink of {k}; for rain seldom fell in Egypt, though sometimes it did in some places, See Gill on "Zec 14:18". The water of the river Nile was not only their common drink, but it was exceeding pleasant, and therefore the loss of it was the greater; it was so remarkable for the sweetness and delicacy of its taste, that in the time of Pescennius Niger, when his soldiers murmured for want of wine, he is reported to have answered them,"what! crave you wine, and have the water of the Nile to drink?"which Mr. Maillott, who lived sixteen years consul for the French nation at Grand Cairo, confirms, and says, that it is grown to be a common proverb, that whoever has once tasted it will ever after pine for it {l}; with this compare Jer 2:18:and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt; in the river, wherever it flowed, in all its streams and channels, and wherever any water was collected out of it, or fetched from it, let it be in what reservoir it would. This is the first plague executed on the Egyptians, and a very righteous one by the law of retaliation for shedding the blood of innocent babes, through casting them into this river; and this will be the second and third vials of God's wrath, which will be poured on antichrist, or mystical Egypt, who will have blood given to drink because worthy, see Re 16:3. Artapanus {m}, an Heathen writer, bears testimony to this miracle, though he does not so fully and clearly express it as it was; he says,"a little after, that is, after the former miracle of the rod turned into a serpent, the Nile, that river whose swelling waves overflow all Egypt, was smitten with the rod; and the water being gathered and stagnated, boiled up, and not only the fishes were destroyed, but the people perished through thirst." {k} Vid. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 29. {l} See the Bishop of Clogher's Chronology of the Hebrew Bible, p. 287. {m} Apud Euseb Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 435. Exodus 7:22 Ver. 22. And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments,.... Who were either in company with Pharaoh and his nobles, or were immediately sent for to try their art, and confront Moses and Aaron with it; and who very probably got a little water in a

vessel, and by some juggling trick imposing upon, and deceiving the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, made it look like blood; and the devil might help them to a sufficient quantity of blood, and discolour the water with it, and make it appear as if it was blood, and which was a poor business; had they turned the bloody river into water again, they would have equalled the miracle of Moses and Aaron, and done some service to their country; but to deceive the sight of people, or to spoil a small quantity of water that was good, by mixing it with blood, was but a mean and unworthy action. Should it be asked from whence they had this water, when all was turned into blood? it may be answered, either from Goshen, as the Targum of Jonathan, the waters of the Hebrews not being affected with this plague: though Aben Ezra thinks they were; or from the sea, as Theodoret; but both these places were too far distant to fetch water from, in the time that Pharaoh stayed here before his return home: rather therefore this water was had from some habitation of the Israelites in the city near at hand, where Pharaoh lived, or was dug for immediately by the magicians, as in Ex 7:24 or it may be that all the waters were not immediately turned into blood, but successively and gradually, first the river, and then its streams, &c. so that there might be near at hand a pool of water, not yet turned into blood, and a vessel of water might be fetched from it, on which they exercised their juggling art: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened: by seeing his magicians do what was similar to what Moses and Aaron had done; and therefore concluded that it was not by the hand of God, but owing to a magic art they were masters of, as his magicians were: neither did he hearken unto them; to Moses and Aaron, and what they said to him, to let the people go: as the Lord had said; had before told he would not hearken to them, Ex 7:4. Exodus 7:23 Ver. 23. And Pharaoh turned, and went into his house,.... Turned away from Moses and Aaron, and turned back from the river to which he came, and went to his palace in the city; it being perhaps now about dinner time, when all before related had passed: neither did he set his heart to this also: had no regard to this miracle of turning the waters into blood, as well as he had none to the rod being turned into a serpent, and devouring the rods of the magicians; he neither considered the one nor the other, or seriously and closely thought of this, any more than of the other. Exodus 7:24 Ver. 24. And all the Egyptians digged round about the river,.... On each side of it, in order to get clear water; and Aben Ezra thinks the Hebrews also, who were affected with this, and the two following plagues, the frogs and lice: but it is much more reasonable to conclude that they were free from them all. This they did for water to drink: for there was none in the river, streams, ponds and pools, or in vessels, in which they used to reserve it, and therefore could come at none but by digging; and whether they obtained any in that way is not said: for they could not drink of the waters of the river; it being turned into blood, and stunk so exceedingly; and though they might strain it, and make it in some measure, drinkable, and might make use of the juice of herbs, and other things, to extinguish their thirst, and the better sort might have a stock of wine, yet multitudes must be greatly distressed, and many perish, as Philo {n} the Jew says they did. {n}

De Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 617. Exodus 7:25 Ver. 25. And seven days were fulfilled,.... Or there were full seven days, a whole week: after that the Lord had smitten the river, and turned it into blood; here the miracle is ascribed to him; Moses and Aaron, and the rod they used, were only instruments, nothing short of almighty power could do such a miracle; it seems this lasted seven days at least. It began, as Bishop Usher {o} computes it, on the eighteen day of the sixth month, or Adar, part of February and part of March, and ended the twenty fifth of the same. It is not said that Pharaoh requested to have it removed, though Philo {p} says he did; his stubborn heart not being humbled enough as yet to ask such a favour, and therefore perhaps it was taken off without asking for it, to make way for another. {o} Annal. Vet. Test. p. 20. {p} Ut supra. (De Vita. Mosis, l. 1. p. 617.)

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 8:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 8

In this chapter Pharaoh is threatened with the plague of frogs, in case he refused to let Israel go, which accordingly was brought upon him, [Ex 8:1](#) and though the magicians did something similar to it, yet these were so troublesome to Pharaoh, that he promised to let the people go, and sacrifice to God, if they removed; and a time being fixed for the removal of them, it was accordingly done at the entreaty of Moses and Aaron, [Ex 8:7](#) but there being a respite, Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and the plague of lice is ordered, and which was executed; and though this the magicians essayed to do, and could not, but owned it to be the finger of God, yet Pharaoh's heart was hardened, [Ex 8:15](#) wherefore he is threatened with a swarm of flies, which should not infest Goshen, only the places where the Egyptians dwelt, and it was so, [Ex 8:20](#) upon which Pharaoh called for Moses, and declared himself willing the people would sacrifice in the land; but this not being satisfactory, he agreed they should go into the wilderness, but not so far; and on the account of the entreaty of Moses, the plague was removed; but still Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not let the people go, [Ex 8:25](#).

Ver. 1. [And the Lord spake unto Moses](#),.... Either whilst the plague upon the waters continued, or immediately upon the removal of it:

[go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, thus saith the Lord, let my people go, that they may serve me](#); mentioning neither time nor place, where, when, and how long they should serve him, for which their dismissal was required, but insist on it in general.

[Exodus 8:2](#)

Ver. 2. [And if thou refuse to let them go](#),.... Will not obey the orders:

[I will smite all thy borders with frogs](#); he gives him warning of the blow before he strikes, which shows his clemency and goodness, his patience and longsuffering; and this he did, not only that he might have time and space for repentance, and thereby avoid the blow; but that when it came, he might be sensible it was not by chance, or owing to second causes, but was from the Lord himself.

[I will smite all thy borders with frogs](#): fill the whole land of Egypt with them, to the

utmost borders thereof on every side. Some {q} say the word signifies a large Egyptian fish, which in the Arabic tongue is called Altamsach, that is, a crocodile, with which the Nile abounded; but such a creature could not invade and attack them in the manner as is after related.

{q} R. Chananeel apud Abendana, and some in Aben Ezra in Ioc.

Exodus 8:3

Ver. 3. **And the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly**,.... The river Nile; and though water, and watery places, naturally produce these creatures, yet not in such vast quantities as to cover a whole country, and so large an one as Egypt, and this done at once, immediately; for they were all produced instantaneously, and in one day were spread all over the nation, and removed the next: and besides what follows is equally miraculous,

which shall go up and come into thine house; which though they may come up out of rivers, and be upon the banks and the meadows adjacent, yet are never known to come into houses, and especially into bedchambers and other places after mentioned, being not a bold but timorous creature, and shuns the sight and company of men; but these came even into the royal palace, nor could his guards keep them out:

and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed; and by their leaping upon him, and croaking in his ears, disturb his rest:

and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people both nobles and common people, and not only get into their houses, but upon their persons, on their hands when about their business, on their laps, and into their bosoms, as they sat; which must be very offensive and troublesome to them, what with their ugly shape, croaking noise and filthy smell, and the disagreeable touch of them, leaping on them, and even upon their food, and all vessels used for the same, which must make it very nauseous and distasteful to them:

and into thy ovens; where they baked their bread, and would be now hindered from the use of them:

and into thy kneadingtroughs; where they kneaded their dough, and made it into loaves, and prepared it for the oven; or the "dough" {r} itself, which they leaped upon and licked, and made it loathsome for use.

{r} Kytwrvamb "in tuas pastas", Pagninus; "in farinam tuam aquis conspersam", Tigurine version; "in reliquiis ciborum tuorum", V. L.

Exodus 8:4

Ver. 4. **And the frogs shall come up both on thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy servants.** No doubt by the interposition of divine power and providence, and it may be by the ministry of angels; so that let them use what care, caution, and diligence they would, there was no keeping them out; but they came upon all the people of the land, high and low, rich and poor, and upon the king's ministers, courtiers, and nobles, and the king himself not excepted; though by this particular enumeration of him, his people, and servants, the children of Israel may be thought to be exempted from this plague, as R. Japhez observes; though Aben Ezra dislikes his remark, but it seems to be just.

Exodus 8:5

Ver. 5. **And the Lord spake unto Moses,**.... By a secret impulse upon his mind, for he was now in the presence of Pharaoh, who had refused to let Israel go:

say unto Aaron, stretch forth thy hand with thy rod; for Aaron carried the rod, and he was the minister of Moses, who was appointed a god to him; and he was to speak and to do whatever he ordered him from the Lord:

over the streams, over the rivers and over the ponds; the seven streams of the river of Nile, and over the canals cut out of it, and over all places where there was a collection of water for any use for man or beast:

and cause frogs to come up upon the land of Egypt; out of the streams, rivers, and ponds, immediately.

Exodus 8:6

Ver. 6. **And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt,**.... That is, towards the waters of the Nile, and towards all places where any water was; for it was not possible he could stretch out his hand over all the waters that were in every place:

and the frogs came and covered the land of Egypt: they came up at once, and in such

multitudes everywhere, that the whole land was full of them; this was done on the twenty fifth of Adar, or February, the same day the former plague ceased; so Artapanus {s}, the Heathen historian says, that Moses by his rod produced frogs, locusts, and lice. And the story which Heraclides Lembus {t} tells seems to be hammered out of this account of Moses, that in Paeonia and Dardania such a number of frogs fell from heaven, as filled the public roads and private houses; at first the inhabitants killed them, and keeping their houses shut, bore it patiently some time; but when it signified nothing, and their household goods were covered with them, and they found them boiled and roasted with their food, and lay in such heaps that they could not tread for them, and were so distressed with the smell of the dead ones, they forsook their country.

{s} Apud Euseb. ut supra. (Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 425.) {t} Apud Athenaei Deipnosophist. l. 8. c. 2.

Exodus 8:7

Ver. 7. **And the magicians did so with their enchantments, &c]** By their secret wiles and juggling tricks:

and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt, that is, some few, as a proof of their art and skill, and to show that Moses and Aaron did but what they could do; but what they did either were only in appearance, deceiving the sight of Pharaoh and his people, or real frogs were brought to them by the help of devils, but not in such numbers: and besides, this was adding to the plague, and not diminishing it; had they done anything to the purpose, they should have removed it at once, or destroyed the frogs; but that they could not do, of which Pharaoh being sensible, he therefore entreated for the removal of them by Moses and Aaron. To this plague there seems to be some reference at the pouring out of the sixth vial, [Re 16:13](#).

Exodus 8:8

Ver. 8. **Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron,**.... He sent for them:

and said, entreat the Lord, that he may take away the frogs from me and from my people; he begins now to know the Lord, whom he knew not before, by the judgments he executed on him, to acknowledge his hand in those judgments, and tacitly to own that none else could remove them; and his proud heart was so far humbled, as to beg the favour of Moses and Aaron to intercede with the Lord to cause this plague to

cease, which was intolerable: and it may be observed from other instances in history, somewhat similar to this, that whole cities and countries have been deserted by their inhabitants on a like occasion, as those of Paeonia and Dardania, in the account above given; and Justin reports {u} of the Abderites, a people of Thrace, that because of the multitude of frogs and mice, were obliged to leave their native country, and seek new habitations; and Diodorus Siculus {w} and Aelianus {x} relate much the same of a people called Autariatae; and Varro {y} affirms, that in a city in France, the inhabitants of it were drove away by frogs; which instances, as they show how very distressing such a calamity is, so they serve to illustrate and confirm the truth of the divine history, cavilled at by infidels, when anything is related in it exceeding the common and ordinary course of things:

and I will let the people go, that they may do sacrifice unto the Lord; as had been frequently required of him, [Ex 5:1](#).

{u} E Trogo, l. 15. c. 2. {w} Bibliothec. l. 3. p. 164. {x} De Animal. l. 17. c. 41. {y} Apud Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 29.

[Exodus 8:9](#)

Ver. 9. [And Moses said unto Pharaoh, glory over me](#),.... If thou canst; take every advantage against me of lessening my glory, and increasing thine own; or vaunt or boast thyself against me, as the phrase is rendered, [Jud 7:2](#) or take this honour and glory to thyself over me, by commanding me, and fixing a time to pray for thee, and I will obey thy orders; which agrees with the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate Latin versions, and the paraphrase of Onkelos, "appoint", or "order for me"; that is, when I shall pray for thee; or do me this honour, to believe me in the sight of the people, to declare before them that thou dost believe that upon my prayer for thee this plague shall be removed:

[when shall I entreat for thee, and for thy servants, and for thy people, to destroy the frogs from thee and thy houses, that they may remain in this river only?](#) Moses agreed to entreat the Lord for him as he desired, but leaves it with him to fix the time for doing it; and this he did, that it might appear that the removal of the frogs, as well as the bringing of them, would not be owing to chance or to any natural cause, but to the Lord himself; and though Moses had no direction from the Lord for this, that is recorded, yet he might presume upon it, since he was made a god to Pharaoh, and had power to do as he pleased; and also he knew the mind and will of God, and might have now a secret impulse upon his spirit, signifying it to him: and besides, he had the faith of miracles, and strongly believed that God would work this by him, and at

whatsoever time should be fixed.

Exodus 8:10

Ver. 10. **And he said, tomorrow**,.... Which according to Bishop Usher was the twenty sixth day of Adar, or February. It may seem strange that Pharaoh, and his people, being so greatly distressed with this plague, should not desire that the Lord would be entreated to do it immediately, and not put it off to another day: two reasons are usually given; one is, he might hope that it would by that time go off of itself, and then he should not be beholden to the Lord, nor to Moses; and the other is, that he thought an affair of this kind could not be done immediately, but that it required time for making the intercession, and performing rites and ceremonies, which he supposed might be used, as were by his magicians; and it might be now the evening of the day, and therefore deferred it till tomorrow:

and he said, be it according to thy word, as if he had said, it shall be done as thou hast desired, and at the time fixed:

that thou mayest know that there is none like unto the Lord our God; that can send plagues, and remove them at his pleasure, which the deities he worshipped, and the magicians he employed, could not do.

Exodus 8:11

Ver. 11. **And the frogs shall depart from thee, and from thy houses, and from thy servants, and from thy people**,.... Signifying there should be a full and clear riddance of them:

they shall remain in the river only; the river Nile.

Exodus 8:12

Ver. 12. **And Moses and Aaron went from Pharaoh**,.... To the place where they used to pray to the Lord, and meet with him, and receive messages from him; this they did the same day the plague was inflicted, the day before the morrow came when the frogs were to be removed:

and Moses cried unto the Lord: prayed unto him with great fervency, and with a loud

voice, most fervently entreating that the frogs might be removed on the morrow, as he had promised, that so he might not be covered with shame and confusion before Pharaoh; his faith of the miracle being wrought did not hinder the use of prayer to God for it:

because of the frogs which he had brought against Pharaoh; as an army: or "put upon" {z} him, as a judgment on him; or rather the sense is, as it may be rendered, "because of the business of the frogs, which he had proposed or promised to Pharaoh" {a}; that is, for the taking of them away, he had proposed to Pharaoh to fix the time when he should entreat the Lord for the removal of them; and he having fixed on the morrow, Moses promised it should be done according to his word; and now he is importunate with the Lord, that it may be done as he had promised.

{z} herpl Mv "posuit", Parhoni, Pagninus, Montanus; "imposuerat", Junius & Tremellius. {a} "Super causa vel negotio ranarum quod proposuerat Pharaoni", Fagius.

Exodus 8:13

Ver. 13. **And the Lord did according to the word of Moses**,.... He heard his prayers, and fulfilled what he had promised Pharaoh:

and the frogs died out of the houses, and out of the villages, and out of the fields; the word for "villages" signifies "courts" {b}, and may be so rendered here; and the sense is, that they not only died out of their dwelling houses, but out of their courtyards, and even out of their gardens, orchards, and fields, so that there were none near them to give any manner of trouble and offence. And their dying, and remaining dead upon the spot, were clear proofs that they were real frogs that were produced, and not in appearance only, as the frogs of the magicians might be; God could have caused them to return to the river from whence they came, or have annihilated them, or removed them out of sight in an instant; but the killing of them, and letting them lie dead, proved the truth of the miracle, and gave apparent evidence of it both ways, both in the bringing and removing them.

{b} truxh Nm "ex atriis", Montanus, Tigurine version, Piscator.

Exodus 8:14

Ver. 14. **And they gathered them together upon heaps**,.... Swept them up, and laid

them in heaps out of the way:

and the land stank; with the stench of the dead frogs, which was another proof and evidence of the reality of the miracle; and that dead frogs will cause such an ill smell appears from the above account of what befell the inhabitants of Paeonia and Dardania, unless that should be the same with this, only the names of places and some circumstances altered; See Gill on "Ex 8:16".

Exodus 8:15

Ver. 15. **But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite**,.... From his affliction, as the Targum of Jonathan adds; the plague was removed, and he found himself and his people at ease: or there was a "breathing" {c}; before he and his people were so oppressed, that they could scarce breathe, but now being delivered from the judgment on them with which they were straitened, were enlarged and at liberty, and in easy circumstances: he hardened his heart; See Gill on "Ex 7:14".

and hearkened not unto them; to Moses and Aaron, to let the children of Israel go, as they had required, and he had promised:

as the Lord had said; had foretold that he would not hearken to them, nor let Israel go as yet.

{c} hxwrh "respiratio", Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Junius and Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius.

Exodus 8:16

Ver. 16. **And the Lord said unto Moses**,.... On the twenty seventh day of the month, according to Bishop Usher, the same day the flogs were removed; no warning is given him of the next plague, at least there is no account of any:

say unto Aaron, stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land; in some one part of the land, that place nearest to him where there was a quantity of dust; for it cannot be imagined that he should smite all the dust of the land in every part of it, but smiting one part served for the whole:

that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt: not gnats, as some, nor flies, as others, but lice, though perhaps not of the common and ordinary sort, but new and

extraordinary, and it may be of different sorts, suitable to different creatures.

Exodus 8:17

Ver. 17. **And they did so**,.... As follows:

for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod; as directed and ordered:

and smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice in man and in beast; which shows it was a miraculous operation, since lice do not usually spring from dust, but thrive in the sweat of bodies, and the nastiness of them, through sloth and idleness; and moreover, this was like the creation of man at first, which was out of the dust of the earth, and alike the effect of almighty power:

all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt; that is, the greatest part of it, not that every atom of dust became lice, nor was the land of Goshen, in which the Israelites dwelt, infected with this plague, unless where any of the Egyptians were; though Dr. Lightfoot {d} thinks, that lice were in Goshen as in other parts of Egypt, there being no severing between Goshen and Egypt mentioned until the next plague; and since Israel had partook of many of the sins of Egypt, they must partake of some of her punishments; and he thinks this is the reason that the plague of lice is not reckoned among the plagues of Egypt in [Ps 78:44](#) because it was common to Israel, and to the Egyptians, and which is the sense of Aben Ezra on [Ex 7:24](#). The account that Artapanus {e}, the Heathen historian, gives of this plague, is this;

"Moses smote the earth with a rod, and produced a certain flying animal, which greatly distressed the Egyptians, and raised ulcers in their bodies, which no physicians could cure."

And so Origen {f} describes this creature as

"having wings and flying in the air, but so subtile and minute as to escape the eye, unless very sharp sighted; but when it lights upon a body, it stings most bitterly, so that what a man cannot see flying, he feels stinging."

Both seem to design the gnat, but this sort of vermin do not stick in and abide with men or beasts, as these here are said to do, but buzz about and bite, and then are gone.

{d} Works, vol. 1. p. 705, 706. {e} Apud Euseb. ut supra. (Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c.

27. p. 435.) {f} In Exod. Homil. 4. fol. 35. col. 2.

Exodus 8:18

Ver. 18. **And the magicians did so with their enchantments, to bring forth lice,**.... They made use of their magical art, and juggling tricks they were masters of, to produce the like sort of creatures, or at least to make such appear, or seem to appear, to the eyes of men:

but they could not; God would not suffer them to do it, to impose upon Pharaoh, and deceive him and the Egyptians any longer; and a stop is put to them, when such small and despicable creatures were produced, the more to put them to shame and confusion, and to show that what they did before was not real, and that what they did in appearance was only by divine permission;

so there were lice upon man and upon beast; these lay in great numbers on both, biting and distressing them in a most terrible manner; for as the magicians could not produce such creatures, it was not in their power to remove them.

Exodus 8:19

Ver. 19. **Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, this is the finger of God,**.... This is to be ascribed to a power superior to human, to a divine power; so long as they could do something similar, or impose upon the senses of men, and make them believe they did the like, they would not acknowledge divine omnipotence; but when they no longer could deceive the sight of Pharaoh and the Egyptian, then they own the effects of a superior power: and this they did partly to detract from the power of Moses and Aaron, because they would not have them pass for more skilful persons in the magic art than themselves; and therefore suggest, that this was done not by virtue of any human skill and art, but by the power of the Supreme Being; and partly to detract from the honour of the God of Israel; for they do not say this is the finger of Jehovah, whom they accounted, as Dr. Lightfoot {g} observes, as a petty trivial god, but this is the finger of Elohim, the Supreme Deity. It is conjectured by some {h}, that in memory of this plague the Egyptian priests scrape their whole bodies, lest there should be a louse or any unclean thing on them when they worship their gods, as Herodotus {i} relates:

and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; either not unto the magicians owning the hand of God, and his divine power in the plague inflicted; or to

Moses and Aaron demanding the dismissal of the people of Israel, which latter seems to be confirmed by the usual phrase, as follows,

as the Lord had said; see [Ex 7:4](#).

{g} Ut supra. (Works, vol. 1. p. 705, 706.) {h} Vid. Scheuchzer. Physica Sacra, vol. 1. p. 132. {i} Euterpe, sive, l. 2. c. 37.

[Exodus 8:20](#)

Ver. 20. **And the Lord said unto Moses, rise up early in the morning,**.... Of the day following, the twenty eight of Adar, or February, according to Bishop Usher; this was the fittest time to meet with Pharaoh, and the most likely to make impressions on him:

and stand before Pharaoh: meet him as he comes along, and stop him, and stand before him as having something to say to him; this was using great boldness and freedom with a king; but as Moses was ordered to do it by the King of kings, it became him to obey him:

lo, he cometh forth to the water; See Gill on "Ex 7:15"and say unto him, thus saith the Lord, let my people go, that they may serve me; which had often been required before, but to no purpose, and in case of refusal he is threatened as follows. Exodus 8:21 Ver. 21. Else, if thou wilt not let my people go,.... But remainest obstinate and inflexible:behold, I will send swarms of flies upon thee; the word used is generally thought to signify a "mixture", and is interpreted by many a mixture of various creatures; the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it a mixture of wild beasts, and so Josephus {k} understands it of all sorts of beasts, of many forms, and such as were never seen before; according to Jarchi, all sorts of evil beasts are meant, as serpents and scorpions, mixed together; and so Aben Ezra says it signifies evil beasts mixed together, as lions, wolves, bears, and leopards; but it is not likely the houses should be filled with these, or the ground covered with them, as after related: and besides, they would soon have destroyed, all the inhabitants of the land, since as it follows they are said to be upon them; rather a mixture of insects is intended; the Septuagint; version renders it the "dog fly", and so Philo the Jew {l}; which, as Pliny {m} says, is very troublesome, to dogs especially, about their ears, and this version Bochart {n} approves of:and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses; they should be sent unto and settle first on his own person, and also on his ministers and courtiers, and upon all his subjects in general, and get into their houses, and be very troublesome guests there:and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of the swarms of flies, and also the ground whereon they are; their number would be so very

great. {k} Antiqu. 1. 2. c. 14. sect. 3. {l} De Vita Mosis, 1. 1. p. 622. {m} Nat. Hist. 1. 11. c. 34. {n} Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 4. c. 15. col. 555. Exodus 8:22 Ver. 22. And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell,.... Distinguish it from other parts of the land of Egypt: that no swarms of flies shall be there; which was a very wonderful thing, and so the word may be rendered. "I will marvellously sever or separate" {o}, and so the Targum of Jonathan, "I will do wonders or miracles in that day": as they were to make such a difference in one part of the country from another, and so near as Goshen was to the place where Pharaoh lived, and to bound and limit such sort of creatures as flies, which move swiftly from place to place, and particularly to keep the land of Goshen clear of them; when, as Bishop Patrick observes, it was a country that abounded with cattle, whose dung is apt to breed flies: to the end thou mayest know that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth; he is God over all the earth, and rules as a King in the midst of it, and does whatsoever he pleases in it; see Ps 74:12 and in the midst of the land of Goshen where his people dwelt, and over whom he was King in a peculiar manner, and took a peculiar care of them, to protect and defend them; and which must the more vex and distress the Egyptians, when they saw the Israelites clear of those plagues they were afflicted with. {o} ytylphw "faciamque mirabilem", V. L. "miraculose agam", Fagius; "marvellously sever", Ainsworth. Exodus 8:23 Ver. 23. And I will put a division between my people and thy people,.... Or, a "redemption" {p}; for by distinguishing them in his providence from the Egyptians, he might be said to redeem or deliver them; thus God makes a difference between his chosen people and the rest of the world, through his Son's redemption of them by his blood, out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation: tomorrow shall this sign be: which, according to Bishop Usher, must be the twenty ninth day of Adar or February. {p} twdp "redemptionem", Pagninus, Montanus, &c. Exodus 8:24 Ver. 24. And the Lord did so,.... And this he did immediately of himself without any means; not by the rod of Aaron, to let the Egyptians see that there was nothing in that rod, that it had no magic virtue in it, and what was done by it was from the Lord himself, who could as well inflict plagues without it as with it; see Ps 105:31 and there came a grievous swarm of flies; or a "heavy" {q} one, which was both very numerous, and very troublesome and distressing: into the house of Pharaoh, and into the houses of his servants, and into all the land of Egypt: into the palace of Pharaoh, and into the palaces of his nobles, ministers, and courtiers, and into the dwelling places of all his subjects, throughout the whole land, excepting the land of Goshen: the land was corrupted by reason of the swarm of flies; Josephus {r} says, the land lay neglected and uncultivated by the husbandmen; it may be, the air was infected by the flies, which produced a pestilence that took off many of the inhabitants; so among the Eleans, as Pliny {s} reports, a multitude of flies produced a pestilence; however, it is certain many of the inhabitants of Egypt perished by them; they might sting them to death, suck their blood, and poison them with their envenomed stings; see Ps 78:45. {q} dbk "gravis", Montanus,

"gravissime", V. L. {r} Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 2. c. 14. sect. 3.) {s} Nat. Hist. l. 10. c. 28. Exodus 8:25 Ver. 25 And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron,.... He and his people not being able to endure this plague of flies any longer; and we read in profane history of such creatures being so troublesome, that people have been obliged to quit their habitations, and seek for new ones; so Pausanias {t} relates of the inhabitants of Myus, that such a number of flies rose out of the lake, that the men were obliged to leave the city, and go to Miletus; so Aelian {u} reports, that the inhabitants of Megara were driven from thence by a multitude of flies, as were the inhabitants of Phaselis by wasps, which creatures also might be in this mixture of insects:and said, go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land; that is, in the land of Goshen, in the place where they were; he was willing to allow them the liberty of sacrificing to their God, which it seems they had before; but then he would not consent they should go out of the land to do it. {t} Achaica, sive l. 7. p. 400. {u} De Animal. l. 11. c. 28. Exodus 8:26 Ver. 26. And Moses said, it is not meet so to do,.... It being the command and will of God that they should go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice there; and besides it was dangerous, the Egyptians might be provoked by their sacrifices to fall upon them, and kill them; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God; by which Moses is not to be understood as calling the idols of Egypt an abomination, as being so to God and to all good men, that were not idolaters; for though they were, Moses would scarcely call them so before Pharaoh, when he could have made use of another word as well; but his meaning is, that the Israelites would sacrifice that which would be an abomination, and very detestable to the Egyptians for them to do. And so the Targum of Jonathan; "for the sheep, which are the idols of the Egyptians, we shall take and offer before the Lord our God." Herodotus {w} says, it was not accounted with the Egyptians lawful to sacrifice any creature but swine, and male oxen, and calves, such as were clean; but nevertheless, as after these times the Egyptians did offer such creatures as oxen, sheep, and goats, at least some of them did, Bishop Patrick thinks this may only refer to the rites and ceremonies of sacrificing, and to the qualities and condition of the beasts that were offered, about which the Egyptians in later ages were very curious; however, be it which it will, something might be done which would displease the Egyptians, and therefore it was best to sacrifice out of their land: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us? rise up in a body in great wrath, and fall upon us and slay us, by taking up stones and casting at us, or by some means or another dispatch us while offering; just as Pilate mingled the blood of the Galilaeans with their sacrifices, Lu 13:1 and the Egyptians were a people that greatly resented any indignity done to their deities, and would prosecute it with great wrath and fury; as appears from an instance which Diodorus Siculus {x} reports he was an eyewitness of, as that a certain Roman having killed a cat, (which is an Egyptian deity,) the mob rose about his house, so that neither the princes sent by the king of Egypt to entreat them, nor the common dread of the Roman name, could deliver the

man from punishment, though he did it imprudently, and not on purpose. {w} Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 41, 42, 45. {x} Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 75. Exodus 8:27Ver. 27. We will go three days' journey into the wilderness,.... As was first insisted on, and from which demand they should not depart:and sacrifice unto the Lord our God, as he shall command us; both what sacrifices shall be offered, and the manner in which they shall be done, both which seemed for the present in a good measure undetermined and unknown; and therefore it was possible, and very probable, that in one or the other they should give offence to the Egyptians, should they sacrifice among them, being at all events resolved to do as the Lord should command them. Exodus 8:28Ver. 28. And Pharaoh said, I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness,.... He does not say three days, though as he allowed them to go into the wilderness and sacrifice, they could not go and come again in less time; nor would Moses have accepted of the grant, as it seems by what follows he had, if he had obliged them to less time:only you shall not go very far away; his meaning is, as Aben Ezra observes, that they should go no further than three days' journey; he was jealous that this was only an excuse to get entirely out of his dominions, and never return more. He might have heard of their claim to the land of Canaan, and of their talk, and hope, and expectation, of going and settling there; and so understood this motion of theirs, to have leave to go into the wilderness for three days, to sacrifice to the Lord, was only a pretence; that their real intention was to proceed on in their journey to Canaan; however, being in this great distress, he made as if he was willing to grant what they desired, and very importunately urged they would pray he might be delivered from this plague:entreat for me; the words seem to be spoken in haste, and with great eagerness and vehemence. Exodus 8:29Ver. 29. And Moses said, behold, I go out from thee,.... Directly, immediately, to the place where he was wont to meet the Lord, and receive orders and instructions from him:and I will entreat the Lord that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh; for as he sent them, he only could remove them, and he could do the one as easily as he did the other:from his servants, and from his people, tomorrow; that there might be a thorough and clear riddance of them from him and all his subjects, and out of every part of his kingdom; which should be done, and was done on the morrow, that is, on the thirtieth day of Adar, answering to part of our February, and part of our March, so that this must be about the middle of March:but let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more, in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the Lord; as in the plague of frogs, refusing to let them go when it was past; which Moses calls an illusion, a mocking of them, and dealing deceitfully, to which he here refers; see Ex 8:15. Exodus 8:30Ver. 30. And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and entreated the Lord. He did as he promised he would, and prayed to the Lord to remove the flies from Pharaoh and his people. Exodus 8:31Ver. 31. And the Lord did according to the word of Moses,.... Did as he entreated him to do, as follows:and he removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; by what means is not said, whether by destroying them at once, as

the frogs, or by driving them away with a wind, as the locusts afterwards:there remained not one; the meaning is not, not one swarm of flies, but not one fly, there was not one left; which looks as if it was in the latter way that they were removed, since, if in the former, they would have remained, though dead, as the frogs did, for a little while. Exodus 8:32Ver. 32. And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also,.... As he did before, when he found the plague was removed, and the flies were gone:neither would he let the people go; through pride and covetousness, being loath to have the number of those under his dominion so much diminished, and to lose so large a branch of his revenues arising from the labour of these people.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 9:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 9

This chapter relates the plague of murrain upon the cattle, and which yet was not upon the cattle of the Israelites, [Ex 9:1](#) and the plague of boils and blains on man and beast, [Ex 9:8](#) and Pharaoh's heart being hardened, Moses is sent to him with a message from the Lord, threatening him that all his plagues should come upon him, and particularly the pestilence, if he would not let Israel go; and signifying, that to show his power in him, and declare his name throughout the earth, had he raised him up, and a kind of amazement is expressed at his obstinacy and pride, [Ex 9:12](#), and he is told that a terrible storm of hail should fall upon the land, and destroy all in the field; wherefore those that regarded the word of the Lord got their cattle within doors, but those that did not took no care of them, [Ex 9:18](#) and upon Moses's stretching out his hand, when ordered by the Lord, the storm began, and destroyed every thing in the field throughout the land, excepting the land of Goshen, [Ex 9:22](#) upon which Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron, acknowledged his sin, and the justice of God, begged they would entreat for him, which Moses did; but when the storm was over, Pharaoh's heart was still more hardened, and he refused to let the people go, [Ex 9:27](#).

Ver. 1. [Then the Lord said unto Moses](#),.... The same day the plague of the flies was removed:

[go in unto Pharaoh](#) boldly, without any fear of him or his court:

[and tell him, thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews](#): speak in the name of Jehovah, the God whom the Hebrews worship, and who owns them for his people, and has a special love for them, and takes a special care of them, and is not ashamed to be called their God, as poor and as oppressed as they be:

[let my people go](#), that they may serve me; this demand had been often made, and, though so reasonable, was refused.

[Exodus 9:2](#)

Ver. 2. [For if thou refuse to let them go](#),.... Continue to refuse, as he had done:

[and wilt hold them still](#); in the land, and under his dominion and oppression.

Exodus 9:3

Ver. 3. Behold, the hand of the Lord,.... Which was stronger than his, with which he held the Israelites:

is upon thy cattle which is in the field: this takes in all in general, of which the particulars follow, though limited to such as were in the field, and so did not take in what were at home in their out houses and stables:

upon the horses: of which there was great plenty in Egypt, as appears from various places of Scripture:

upon the asses; used for carrying burdens from place to place:

and upon the camels; used the like purposes, and to ride upon, and particularly to travel with through desert places for commerce, being able to proceed on without water for a considerable time:

upon the oxen, and upon the sheep; oxen were for labour to plough with, and sheep for their wool, and all of them to trade with: there shall be

a very grievous murrain: or "pestilence" {y}, a very noisome one, and which would carry off great numbers; the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan render it a "death", as the Jews commonly call a pestilence, whether on man or beast, because it generally sweeps away large numbers.

{y} rbd "pestis", V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator; "pestilentia", Drusius; so Tigurine version.

Exodus 9:4

Ver. 4. And the Lord shall sever between the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt,.... Make such a difference and distinction between them, that the murrain should not be on the one, when it was on the other, and which was a very marvellous thing; and especially in the land of Goshen, where the Egyptians had much cattle, and Pharaoh himself, see [Ge 47:6](#) and yet, though the cattle of Israel breathed in the same air, drank of the same water, and fed in the same pastures, they had not the murrain as the cattle of Egypt had; and the word here used signifies a marvellous separation, as has

been observed on [Ex 7:22](#):

and there shall nothing die of all that is the children's of Israel; not an horse, nor an ass, nor an ox, nor a sheep.

[Exodus 9:5](#)

Ver. 5. **And the Lord appointed a set time**,.... For the coming of this plague, that it might plainly appear it came from him, and was not owing to any natural cause:

saying, tomorrow the Lord shall do this thing in the land; thus giving him time and space, as he had often done before, to consider the matter well, repent of his obstinacy, and dismiss the people of Israel, and so prevent the plague coming upon the cattle, as threatened.

[Exodus 9:6](#)

Ver. 6. **And the Lord did that thing on the morrow**,.... Brought a murrain, or a pestilential disease on the cattle. This, according to Bishop Usher, was on the second day of the seventh month, which afterwards became the first month, the month Abib, which answers to part of March and part of April, and seems to be about the seventeenth of March:

and all the cattle of Egypt died; not all absolutely, for we read of some afterwards, [Ex 9:9](#) but all that were in the field, [Ex 9:3](#) and it may be not strictly all of them, but the greatest part of them, as Aben Ezra interprets it; some, and a great many of all sorts, in which limited sense the word "all" is frequently used in Scripture:

but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one; at least of the murrain, or by the hand of God, and perhaps not otherwise, which was very wonderful, since such a disorder is usually catching and spreading.

[Exodus 9:7](#)

Ver. 7. **And Pharaoh sent**,.... Messengers to the land of Goshen, to see whether the murrain was upon the cattle of Israel or not, and whether any of them died or not. The Targum of Jonathan is,

"he sent to Pelusium to see"

and inquire about this matter; that is, to Raamses, for so that paraphrase calls Raamses in [Ex 1:11](#) a city built by the Israelites, and where many of them might dwell. This Pharaoh did, not merely out of curiosity, but to know whether the divine prediction was accomplished, and that he might have wherewith to confront it, could he find the murrain was upon any of the cattle of Israel, or any died of it; and if they did not, his view might be to convert them to his own use, and make up his loss, and the loss of his people, in a good measure in this way, and perhaps this may be the reason why he so little regarded this plague:

and, behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead; which was very wonderful, and therefore a "behold", a note of admiration, is prefixed to it, yet it made no impression on Pharaoh:

and the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go; though this plague was so heavy upon him and his people, and the loss they sustained so great: in the other plagues of the water, the frogs, lice, and flies, though very troublesome and terrible, yet the loss was not very great; but here much damage was done to their property, yet this did not make his heart relent, or cause him to yield to let Israel go.

Exodus 9:8

Ver. 8. And the Lord said unto Moses and unto Aaron,.... This very probably was the day following, on the third day of the month Abib, about the eighteenth of March, that orders were given to bring on the following plague:

take to you handfuls of ashes of the furnace; either in which the bricks were burnt, or rather in which food was boiled, since it can scarcely be thought there should be brickkiln furnaces so near Pharaoh's court; though perhaps some reference may be had to them, and to the labour of the children Israel at them, and as a just retaliation for their oppression of them in that way. These ashes were such as were blown off the coals, and though fresh, yet not so hot but that they could take and hold them in their hands:

and let Moses sprinkle it towards the heaven, in the sight of Pharaoh; this was to be done before Pharaoh, that he might be an eyewitness of the miracle, he himself seeing with his own eyes that nothing else were cast up into the air but a few light ashes; and this was to be done towards heaven, to show that the plague or judgment came down from heaven, from the God of heaven, whose wrath was now revealed from thence;

and Moses he was to do this; he alone, as Philo {z} thinks, or rather both he and Aaron, since they were both spoken to, and both filled their hands with ashes; it is most likely that both cast them up into the air, though Moses, being the principal person, is only mentioned.

{z} De Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 622.

Exodus 9:9

Ver. 9. **And it shall become small dust in all the land of Egypt**,.... Which ashes, thrown up into the air, should be so multiplied and spread as to be over all the land of Egypt, and come down like showers of snow or sleet everywhere, only of a hot and scalding nature; or these handfuls of ashes were to be cast up into the air, and come down in the above manner, about Pharaoh's court, as a sign and token of what would be the case all over the kingdom:

and shall be a boil breaking forth [with] blains; that is, these ashes becoming a small dust, and falling down like the dew, snow, or sleet, yet hot and burning, should produce sore boils, burning ulcers, hot carbuncles, rising up in pustules, blisters, and buboes, which last word is pretty near in sound with the Hebrew word here used:

upon man, and upon beast, throughout all the land of Egypt; so that, as the last plague affected their property, substance, and riches, which in those times greatly lay in cattle, this, besides that, would affect their persons, and give them exceeding great pain, though it might not issue in death.

Exodus 9:10

Ver. 10. **And they took ashes of the furnace**,.... Which was near at hand, perhaps in Pharaoh's kitchen:

and stood before Pharaoh; not in his palace, or in any covered room, but in some place open to the heaven, a courtyard or garden adjoining to the palace: and Moses sprinkled it up towards heaven; cast it up in the air; this being again ascribed to Moses, seems to confirm the notion of those who think he only did it; but, for the reasons before given, both may be thought to be concerned:

and it became a boil breaking forth with blains, upon man, and upon beast; these falling down in the manner before described, on whomsoever they lighted, whether

man or beast, produced sore boils and inflammations, and raised blisters and blotches; and hence arose those lying scandalous stories of the Israelites being a scabby people, and of their being driven out of Egypt on that account, affirmed by Manetho, Lysimachus, Diodorus Siculus, Tacitus, Justin, and others; See Gill on "Ex 4:6" with this plague the first vial poured forth on mystical Egypt, or antichrist, has some agreement, [Re 16:2](#).

[Exodus 9:11](#)

Ver. 11. **And the magicians could not stand before Moses, because of the boils,**.... Which were on them as on others, and which with all their art and skill they could not keep off; and which were so sore upon them, and painful to them, that they were obliged to withdraw, and could not stand their ground, confronting Moses, contesting and litigating with him; for it seems, though they had not acted, nor attempted to act in imitation of Moses and Aaron, since the plague of the lice, yet they still continued about Pharaoh, lessening as much as in them lay the miracles wrought by them, and suggesting that they had done the most and the worst they could, and so contributing to harden the heart of Pharaoh against the people of Israel; wherefore they were righteously punished with boils for so doing, and for their contempt of the messengers and miracles of God, and for their imposition upon men, and their deception of them:

for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians; but not upon Moses and Aaron, nor upon any of the Israelites, and was afterwards called peculiarly the botch of Egypt, [De 28:27](#).

[Exodus 9:12](#)

Ver. 12. **And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh,**.... He having often, and so long hardened his own heart, God gave him up to judicial hardness of heart, to his own corruptions, the temptations of Satan, and the lying magicians about him, to make an ill use of everything that offered to him, and put a wrong construction on all that befell him, so that whatever was said to him, or inflicted on him, made no impression to any purpose:

and he hearkened not unto them; to Moses and Aaron, and to the Lord by them:

as the Lord had spoken to Moses; both that he would harden his heart, and he should not hearken to them; all this was no other than what the Lord had said should be, [Ex 4:21](#).

Exodus 9:13

Ver. 13. **And the Lord said unto Moses, rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh,....** Who it seems used to rise early in the morning, and so was a fit time to meet with him, and converse with him; it might be one of the mornings in which he used to go to the water early, though not mentioned, unless that was every morning:

and say unto him, thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, let my people go, that they may serve me; thus had he line upon line, and precept upon precept, so that he was the more inexcusable, see [Ex 9:1](#).

Exodus 9:14

Ver. 14. **For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart,....** Not meaning particularly the plague of the hail, which next follows, so called, because it consisted of various things, as hail, rain, lightning, and thunder, as Aben Ezra, and who observes, that Pharaoh was more terrified with this plague than with any other; but rather all the plagues yet to come, for by them are not meant all the plagues that were in the power of God to inflict, which how many and great they are none can say, but all that he had determined in his mind to bring upon him; and these should not so much affect and afflict his body, as the boils and ulcers had the magicians, but should reach his heart, and fill him with horror and terror:

and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; even all that he intended to bring not only upon himself, but upon his subjects, both high and low:

that thou mayest know, that there is none like unto me in all the earth; for the perfections of his nature, and the works of his hands, particularly his providential dealings with the sons of men, and especially with him.

Exodus 9:15

Ver. 15. **For now will I stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence,....** Which yet we never find was done; for though this by many is referred to the slaying of the firstborn, yet it is not certain that this was done by the pestilence: besides, Pharaoh was not then smitten, nor his people, only their firstborn; wherefore these words are to be rendered, not in the future, but in the imperfect or

preterpluperfect tense, thus; "for when now I stretched out my hand, or if now I had stretched out my hand to smite thee and thy people with pestilence" {a}; that is, at the time when he smote the cattle with the murrain or pestilence, when he could as well have smote him and his people with it; there was no want of power in God to do it, and had he done it, it would have been all over with him and them:

and thou shall be cut off from the earth; or "thou hadst been, or wouldest have been cut off from the earth" {b} must have perished out of it, and been no more in the land of the living.

{a} ytxlv hte yk "modo enim cum extendi", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, "vel si extendissem", Fagius, Cocceius; so Jarchi, Gersom, Targ. Onk. & Jon. {b} dxktw "sic fuisses excisus", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Cocceius.

Exodus 9:16

Ver. 16. And in very deed, for this cause have I raised thee up,.... Or but truly or verily {c}; instead of smiting thee with the pestilence, and cutting thee off out of the land of the living, "I have raised thee up"; made thee to stand {d}, to continue in being; I have preserved thine from perishing by the former plagues, and have reserved thee for greater judgments and sorer punishments. It may take in all that God did to him; the constitution and appointment of him to all this in his eternal mind; his bringing him into being, and raising him up to kingly dignity; preserving him from perishing by the pestilence, boils and blains, and keeping him for future evils, and all upon this account for the following reasons:

for to shew in thee my power; in working miracles, inflicting judgments one after another, and especially in destroying him and his host in the Red sea:

and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth; as it has been more by that last action than by all the rest of the plagues; though, in all, his sovereignty, wisdom, power, patience, longsuffering, and justice, are most visibly displayed and glorified.

{c} Mlwaw "veruntamen", Junius & Tremellius, Psicator, Drusius, Fagius; so Ainsworth. {d} Kytdmeh "stare fecite", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus.

Exodus 9:17

Ver. 17. **As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go?**] And so against God himself, disobeying his commands, despising his messengers, and slighting his miracles, and hardening his heart against him, and refusing to let Israel go, after all; thereby showing the most intolerable pride and insolence not only against the Lord's poor people, but against himself, for what is done to them he takes as done to himself; or "dost thou still tread upon my people?" {e} trample them under foot, and make an highway or causeway of them.

{e} ymeb llwtom Kdwe "adhuc tu calcas populum meum?" some in Drusius; so Jarchi.

Exodus 9:18

Ver. 18. **Behold, tomorrow about this time,**.... It was now the fourth day of the month Abib, and the fifth when the following was inflicted:

I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail; which should fall very thick, and the hailstones be very numerous and heavy, and the storm last long:

such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof, even until now; not since the earth or land itself was founded, for that was founded when the rest of the world was, and the sense then would be the same as since the foundation of the world; and so the Targum of Jonathan seems to understand it, paraphrasing the words,

"from the day that men were made, even until now."

And a like expression is used of a storm of hail, thunder, and lightning, and earthquakes yet to come, which will be such as has not been since men were upon the earth, with which this plague may be compared, [Re 16:19](#), but here is meant since Egypt was inhabited, or rather formed into a kingdom, and founded as such, which had been many hundreds of years before this time; there was a king of Egypt in Abraham's time; the first founder of this empire, and king of it, was Mizraim, the son of Ham, from whom it had its name, by which it is usually called in Scripture. This supposes that it did sometimes rain in Egypt, contrary to a vulgar notion, or otherwise there would have been no room for the comparison; though it must be owned that rain is rare in Egypt, especially in some parts of it; See Gill on "Zec 14:18".

Exodus 9:19

Ver. 19. **Send therefore now, and gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field,**....

The servants that were at work there: this is said to denote both the certainty of the plague, and the terribleness of it, that all, both men and beast, would perish by it, if care was not taken to get them home; and also to show the wonderful clemency and mercy of God to such rebellious, hardened, and undeserving creatures, as Pharaoh and his people were; in the midst of wrath and judgment God remembers mercy: for upon every man and beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home; and there sheltered in houses, barns, and stables: the hail shall come down upon them, and they shall die; the hailstones that would fall would be so large and so heavy as to kill both men and beasts, like those which fell from heaven upon the Canaanites in the days of Joshua, which killed more than the sword did, Jos 10:11. Exodus 9:20 Ver. 20. He that feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh,.... Who, if they had not the true fear of God, and were not sincere proselytes, yet had a servile fear of him, and dreaded his word, his threatening, his denunciations of judgments and predictions of future punishments; of which they had had many instances wherein they were fulfilled, and therefore had reason to fear that this also would, even the word that had been just now spoken: made his servants and cattle flee into the houses; called home his servants, and drove his cattle in great haste out of the fields, and brought them home as fast as he could, and housed them; in which he acted the wise and prudent part, and showed a concern for his servants and his cattle, as well as believed the word of the Lord. Exodus 9:21 Ver. 21. And he that regarded not the word of the Lord,.... Or "set not his heart" {f} "unto it", took no notice of it, but treated it with the utmost contempt; and of this sort it may be thought there were the far greatest number: everyone of this cast left his servants and cattle in the field; let them remain there, and took no care of them, nor thought about them, and so took no methods to preserve them; in which he acted a foolish part, to his own detriment and loss. {f} wbl Mv al "non posuit cor suum", Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Fagius. Exodus 9:22 Ver. 22. And the Lord said unto Moses,.... When the morrow was come, the fifth day of the month Abib: stretch forth thine hand toward heaven; with his rod in it, as appears from the next verse, to show that the following plague would come from the heaven, that is, the air, and from God, who dwells in the heaven of heavens: that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt; not only in that spot, and near it, where Moses stood, and from that part of the heaven towards which he stretched forth his hand, but from the whole heaven all over the land of Egypt; which shows it to be an unusual and extraordinary hail, for a hail storm seldom reaches far, a mile it may be, or some such space; but never was such an one heard of as to reach through a whole country, and so large an one as Egypt: upon man and upon beast; such as belonged to those who would take no warning, nor attend to the word of the Lord to fetch home their servants and cattle: and upon every herb of the field throughout the land of Egypt; it should fall so thick, that scarce an herb would escape it. Exodus 9:23 Ver. 23. And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven,.... The same which Aaron had made use of before, but was now in the hand of Moses, and whose rod it properly was: and the Lord sent thunder and hail,

and the fire ran along upon the ground, hot thunderbolts, which struck their flocks, Ps 78:48 and hail which fell so thick and weighty as to destroy both men and cattle, and break trees in pieces, and spoil the corn, the grass, and the tender herb; and fire, that is lightning, which descended so low, and in such quantities, as ran along the ground, and consumed all it met with. Artapanus {g}, an Heathen writer, who speaks of this storm of hail, says, that Moses, besides the hail, caused earthquakes by night, so that those that escaped the earthquakes were taken away by the hail, and those that escaped the hail perished by the earthquakes, which he says overthrew all the houses, and most of the temples:and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt; upon Egypt, where rain was not common, and on all the land of Egypt, when in some parts of it it was scarce known, and hail as thick as rain; ice, snow, and hail, are most rarely if ever seen there, the air not being cold enough for the production of them {h}. This was the Lord's immediate doing, when there was no likelihood of it, nor any appearance of second causes concurring to produce it, and came at the exact time he had foretold it should; all which were very extraordinary. {g} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 435, 436. {h} Vid. Scheuchzer. Physica Sacra, vol. 1. p. 139. Exodus 9:24Ver. 24. So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail,.... Which was a miracle within a miracle, as Aben Ezra observes; and very wonderful indeed it was, that the hail did not quench the fire, nor the fire melt the hail, as Philo the Jew {i} remarks:very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt, since it became a nation; See Gill on "Ex 9:18". {i} De Vita. Mosis, l. 1. p. 620. Exodus 9:25Ver. 25. And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt,.... It was in all the land, and it smote and did mischief in all parts of it, only in Goshen, after excepted:all that was in the field, both man and beast; which they that neglected the word of the Lord took no care to fetch home, these were all smitten and destroyed by the hail: and the hail smote every herb of the field; that is, the greatest part of them, for some were left, which the locusts afterwards ate, Ex 10:15, and brake every tree of the field; and the vines and fig trees, Ps 78:47. Exodus 9:26Ver. 26. Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel [were], was there no hail. So that such Egyptians as might dwell among them, they, their servants, their cattle, and their fruits, escaped this plague; and oftentimes do wicked men fare the better for the people of God that are among them. Exodus 9:27Ver. 27. And Pharaoh sent,.... Not persons to observe whether there was any hail fell in the land of Goshen, though there are some {k} that so supply the words; but it cannot be thought that Pharaoh would send, or that any would go thither amidst such a storm of thunder and hail; but he sent messengers, and called Moses and Aaron; who might be in his palace, at least not very far off:and said unto them, I have sinned this time; not but that he had sinned before, and must be conscious of it, particularly in breaking his promise so often; but now he acknowledged his sin, which he had never done before: and this confession of sin did not arise from a true sense of it, from hatred of it, and sorrow for it as committed against God; but from the fright he was in, the horror of his mind, the dread of the present plague being continued; and

the terror of death that seized him, the rebounding noise of the thunder in his ears, the flashes of lightning in his face, and the hailstones beating upon the top of his house, and against the windows and sides of it, frightened him exceedingly, and forced this confession from him: the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked; which was well spoken, had it been serious and from his heart; for God is righteous in his nature, and in all his works, and in all those judgments he had inflicted upon him; and he and his people were wicked in using the Israelites in such a cruel manner, and in detaining them when it had been promised them again and again that they should have leave to go, and especially in rebelling against God, and disobeying his commands. {k} "Misset qui observarent", Junius & Tremellius. Exodus 9:28 Ver. 28. Entreat the Lord, for it is enough,.... Hail, thunder, and lightning enough; or pray that this may be enough, and thought sufficient, and that there may be no more; or "entreat the Lord, and much" {l}; pray, and pray much, pray earnestly and without intermission until the plague ceases: that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail; or "voices of God" {m}; for thunder is the voice of God, and these thunderings or voices were very loud, the claps were very terrible to hear, and the hail was very grievous and heavy, and the whole was very amazing and frightful, and the more to Pharaoh, who perhaps had never heard the voice of thunder, or seen an hail storm before, even a common one, these being rare in the land of Egypt: and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer; go the three days' journey into the wilderness, directly and immediately; he would not put it off, on any account, and much less refuse to let them go at all, as he had often done. {l} brw-yryteh "orate multam", Rivet. {m} Myhlatq "voces Dei", Montanus, Drusius. Exodus 9:29 Ver. 29. And Moses said unto him, as soon as I am gone out of the city,.... Zoan or Tanis, for it was in the field of Zoan where these wonders were wrought, Ps 78:12, the reason why he went out of the city to pray, Jarchi says, was because it was full of idols; but the truer reason was, that he might be private and alone while he was praying to God; and perhaps he went out also to show that he was not frightened at the storm, or afraid of being destroyed by it, and was confident of preservation in the midst of it, in the open field, by the power of God, whom he served: I will spread abroad my hands unto the Lord; which was a prayer gesture directed to by the light of nature, and was used very anciently, and by the Heathens, as well as others; of which the learned Rivet has given many instances in his comment on this text: and the thunder shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; this he had faith in, and full assurance of before he prayed for it; he knew the mind and will of God, and not only he knew what he could do, but what he would do, and which he tells Pharaoh of before hand; which was a full proof that he was a god to Pharaoh, as the Lord said he had made him, Ex 7:1 that thou mayest know how that the earth is the Lord's; that the whole earth is his, and therefore he can do, and does in it whatever he pleases; as the heavens also are his, and therefore can cause thunder, lightning, hail, and rain, and stop them when he thinks fit; or that the land of Egypt particularly was his, and not Pharaoh's, and therefore could destroy, or save it at

his pleasure; and particularly it being his, Pharaoh had no right to detain his people in it against his will, who was Lord of it. Exodus 9:30 Ver. 30. But as for thee, and thy servants,.... Notwithstanding the confession of sin he had made, and his earnest request that the Lord might be entreated to remove this plague, and though he had been assured it would be removed: I know that ye will not yet fear the Lord God: they had not feared him yet; the confession of sin made did not arise from the true fear of God, but from a dread of punishment, and when delivered from this plague, the goodness of God would have no such effect as to cause him and his servants to fear the Lord; or "I know, that before ye were afraid of the face of the Lord God" {n}, which Kimchi {o} and Ben Melech interpret thus, "I know that thou and thy servants, before I pray for you, are afraid of the face of the Lord God, but after I have prayed, and the thunders and rain are ceased, ye will sin again;" and so they did. {n} Nwaryt Mrj "priusquam timeretis", Tigurine version. {o} Sepher Shorash, rad. Mrj. Exodus 9:31 Ver. 31. And the flax and the barley was smitten,.... With the hail, thunder, and lightning, and were beat down, bruised, broken, and blasted, and destroyed; of the former there were great quantities produced in Egypt, which was famous for linen, much was made there, and there were many that wrought in fine flax, see Isa 19:9 and the latter were used not only to feed their cattle, but to make a drink of, as we do, ale and strong beer; and so the Egyptians use it to this day, as Dr. Shaw {p} says, both to feed their cattle, and after it is dried and parched, to make a fermented, intoxicating liquor, called "bonzah"; probably the same with the barley wine of the ancients, and a species of the "sicar", or strong drink of the Scriptures: for the barley [was] in the ear, and the flax [was] balled; or in the stalk, quite grown up, and so the ears of the one were beat off, and the stalks of the other battered with the hail, and broken and destroyed. {p} Travels, tom. 2. c. 2. sect. 5. p. 407. Ed. 2. Exodus 9:32 Ver. 32. But the wheat and the rye were not smitten,.... Bruised, broken, beat down, and destroyed by hail: the word by us rendered "rye", and by other "fitches" or "spelt", is thought by Dr. Shaw {q} to be "rice", of which there were and still are plantations in Egypt; whereas rye is little, if at all known in those countries, and besides is of the quickest growth; and he observes that rice was the "olyra" of the ancient Egyptians, by which word the Septuagint render the Hebrew word here; and from Pliny {r} we learn, that "olyra", and "oryza", or rice, are the same, and which with the Greeks is "zea", by which some translate the word here: for they were not grown up; and so their leaves, as the same traveller observes, were at that time of so soft and yielding a nature, that the hail by meeting with no resistance, as from the flax and barley, did them no harm; and so the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it: "they were late"; and so the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi interpret it: for the wheat harvest with the Jews, and so with the Egyptians, was later than the barley harvest, there being about a month's difference between them: some render the word "dark or hidden" {s} because, as Aben Ezra says, they were now under ground; and if this was the case, indeed the reason is clear why they were not smitten; but this was not the case, for, according to Pliny {t}, there

was but one month's difference in Egypt between the barley and the wheat; but rather they are said to be so, because the ear was as yet hid, and was not come forth; it just began to spindle, or, as the above traveller explains it, they were of a dark green colour, as young corn generally is, as contradistinction to its being of a bright yellow or golden colour, when it is ripe; for, adds he, the context supposes the wheat and the rice not only to have been sown, but to have been likewise in some forwardness, as they well might be in the month of Abib, answering to our March. {q} Travels, tom. 2. c. 2. sect. 5. p. 407. Ed. 2. {r} Nat. Hist. l. 18. c. 7. 9. {s} tlypa "caliginosa", Montanus, Vatablus; "latuerant", Tigurine version; "latentia", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius. {t} Ut supra. (Nat. Hist. l. 18. c. 7. 9.) Exodus 9:33 Ver. 33. And Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh,.... Into the field, where, being retired from company, he could freely, and without being disturbed, pray unto God:and spread abroad his hands unto the Lord; denoting the spreading of cases before God, and expectation, hope, and readiness to receive favours from him:and the thunder and hail ceased; immediately upon the entreaty of Moses; see the power and prevalence of prayer: a like instance we have in Elijah, Jas 5:17 and the rain was not poured upon the earth; so that there was rain as well as hail, which was restrained and entirely ceased. Exodus 9:34 Ver. 34. And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, and the hail, and the thunders were ceased,.... And there was a clear sky and a fine serene heaven, the black clouds were dispersed and gone, and he heard no more the clattering of the hailstones, and the terrible claps of thunder, and saw no more the flashes of lightning, but all was calm and composed:he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants; instead of giving glory to God, who had heard the prayers of Moses and Aaron for them, and had delivered them from their frights and fears, and the terror and horror they were in, and of letting the people of Israel go, see Re 16:21. Exodus 9:35 Ver. 35. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened,.... Instead of being softened, as it seemed to be when under the plague, it became harder and harder when delivered from it:neither would he let the children of Israel go; though he had so absolutely promised it, and assured them that he would not keep them, and that they should not stay any longer:as the Lord had spoken by Moses; that so his heart would be hardened until the signs and wonders were multiplied upon him, God designed to perform, Ex 4:21.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 10:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 10

This chapter is introduced with giving the reasons why the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, [Ex 10:1](#). Moses and Aaron go in to him, and once more demanded in the name of the Lord the dismissal of the people of Israel, and in case of refusal, threatened him with locusts being sent into his country, which should make terrible havoc in all his coasts, [Ex 10:3](#), the servants of Pharaoh entreat him to let them go, upon which Moses and Aaron are brought in again, and treated with about the terms of their departure; but they, insisting upon taking all with them, men, women, and children, and flocks and herds, and Pharaoh not willing that any but men should go, they are drove from his presence in wrath, [Ex 10:7](#) wherefore the locusts were brought on all the land, which made sad devastation in it, [Ex 10:12](#), and this wrought on Pharaoh so far as to acknowledge his sin, pray for forgiveness, and to desire Moses and Aaron to entreat the Lord to remove the plague, which they did, and it was removed accordingly, but still Pharaoh's heart was hardened, [Ex 10:16](#) then followed the plague of thick darkness over all the land for three days, which brought Pharaoh to yield that all should go with them excepting their flocks and herds; but Moses not only insisted that not a hoof should be left behind, but that Pharaoh should give them sacrifices and burnt offerings, [Ex 10:21](#). Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he refused to comply, and Moses was bid to be gone, and take care never to see his face any more, and which Moses agreed to, [Ex 10:27](#).

Ver. 1. **And the Lord said unto Moses, go in unto Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart,**.... Or, as some render it, "though I have hardened his heart" {u}; or otherwise it would seem rather to be a reason he should not go, than why he should; at least it would be discouraging, and he might object to what purpose should he go, it would be in vain, no end would be answered by it; though there was an end God had in view, and which was answered by hardening his heart,

and the heart of his servants; whose hearts also were hardened until now; until the plague of the locusts was threatened, and then they relent; which end was as follows:

that I might shew these my signs before him; which had been shown already, and others that were to be done, see [Ex 7:3](#) or in the midst of him {w}, in the midst of his land, or in his heart, see [Ex 9:14](#).

{u} yk "quamvis", Piscator; so Ainsworth. {w} wbrqb "in medio ejus", Pagninus, Drusius; "in interioribus ejus", Montanus.

Exodus 10:2

Ver. 2. **And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son,**.... Not of his sons and grandsons only; for Moses here, as Aben Ezra observes, was in the stead of Israel; and the sense is, that it should be told to their posterity in all succeeding ages:

what things I have wrought in Egypt; the plagues that he inflicted on the Egyptians:

and my signs which I have done amongst them; meaning the same things which were signs:

that ye may know how that I am the Lord; that their God is the true Jehovah, and the one only living and true God; the Lord God omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, infinite, and eternal.

Exodus 10:3

Ver. 3. **And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh,**.... As the Lord commanded them, for what is before said to Moses was designed for Aaron also, his prophet and spokesman:

and said unto him, thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews; as the ambassadors of the God of Israel, and in his name said:

how long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me? to acknowledge his offence, lie low before God, and be subject to his will; he had humbled himself for a moment, but then this did not continue; what God expected of him, and complains of the want of, was such a continued humiliation before him, and such a subjection to him, as would issue in complying with what he had so often demanded of him, and is as follows:

let my people go, that they may serve me; see [Ex 9:1](#).

Exodus 10:4

Ver. 4. **Else, if thou refuse to let my people go**,.... He threatens him with the following plague, the plague of the locusts, which Pliny {x} calls "denrum irae pestis":

behold, tomorrow will I bring the locusts into thy coast; according to Bishop Usher {y} this was about the seventh day of the month Abib, that this plague was threatened, and on the morrow, which was the eighth day, it was brought; but Aben Ezra relates it as an opinion of Japhet an Hebrew writer, that there were many days between the plague of the hail, and the plague of the locusts, that there might be time for the grass and plants to spring out of the field; but this seems not necessary, for these locusts only ate of what were left of the hail, as in the following verse.

{x} Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29. {y} Annales Vet. Test. p. 21.

Exodus 10:5

Ver. 5. **And they shall cover the face of the earth, that one cannot be able to see the earth**,.... Or, "cover the eye of the earth" {z}; either the appearance and colour of the earth, so as they could not be discerned for the multitude of the locusts on it; so the word is used in [Nu 11:7](#) or the eye of man looking upon the earth, which would not be able to see it, because the locusts would be between his eye and the earth. The Targum of Onkelos is,

"and shall cover the eye of the sun of the earth,"

so that its rays shall not reach the earth; and so Abarbinel interprets it of the sun, which is the light of the earth, when it casts forth its rays, as the eye upon the object that is seen; and the meaning is, that the locusts should be so thick between the heavens and the earth, that the eye of the earth, which is the sun, could not see or cast its rays upon it, as in [Ex 10:15](#), and so Pliny says {a}, that locusts came sometimes in such multitudes as to darken the sun:

and they shall eat the residue of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail; particularly the wheat and the rye, or rice, which was not grown, [Ex 9:32](#) and the herb or grass of the land, [Ex 10:12](#)

and shall eat every tree which groweth for you out of the field; such fruit trees as escaped the hail, and such boughs and branches of them which were not broken off by it, [Ex 10:15](#) and locusts will indeed eat trees themselves, the bark of them, and gnaw everything, even the doors of houses, as Pliny {b} relates.

{z} Urah Nye "oculum terrae", Montanus, Piscator; so Ainsworth. {a} Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29. {b} Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29.

Exodus 10:6

Ver. 6. **They shall fill thy houses**,.... The king's palace and all the offices of it:

and the houses of thy servants; the palaces of his nobles and courtiers:

and the houses of all the Egyptians; of all the common people, not only in the metropolis, but in all the cities and towns in the kingdom; and so Dr. Shaw {c} says, the locusts he saw in Barbary, in the years 1724 and 1725, climbed as they advanced over every tree or wall that was in their way; nay, they entered into our very houses and bedchambers, he says, like so many thieves:

which neither thy fathers, nor thy fathers' fathers, have seen since the day they were upon the earth unto this day; for size, for numbers, and for the mischief they should do; for though they have sometimes appeared in great numbers, and have covered a large spot of ground where they have settled, and devoured all green things, yet never as to cover a whole country at once, and so large an one as Egypt, and destroy all green things in it; at least, never such a thing had been seen or known in Egypt before since it was a nation, though it was a country sometimes visited by locusts; for Pliny {d} says, that in the country of Cyreniaca, which was near Egypt, see [Ac 2:10](#) there was a law made for the diminishing of them, and keeping them under, to be observed three times a year, first by breaking their eggs, then destroying their young, and when they were grown up:

and he turned himself, and went out from Pharaoh; as soon as Moses had delivered his message, perceiving anger in Pharaoh's countenance, and concluding from hence and some gestures of his that he should not succeed, and perhaps might be bid to go away, though it is not recorded; or "he looked and went out from him" {e}, in honour to the king, as R. Jeshuah observes, he went backward with his face to the king; he did not turn his back upon him, but went out with his face to him; and which as it was and is the manner in the eastern countries, so it is with us at this day, to go from the presence of the king, not with the back, but with the face turned toward him, so long as he is to be seen.

{c} Travels, p. 187, Edit. 2. {d} Ut supra. (Nat. Hist. 11. c. 29.) {e} Npyw "et respexit", Pagninus, "et respiciens exivit", &c. Tigurine version.

Exodus 10:7

Ver. 7. **And Pharaoh's servants said to him,**.... His courtiers and counsellors, such of them as were not so hardened as others, or however now began to relent, and dreaded what would be the consequence of things, even the ruin of the whole country, the good of which they seem to have had at heart:

how long shall this man be a snare unto us? an occasion of ruin and destruction, as birds by a snare; they speak in a contemptuous manner of Moses, calling him "this man", the rather to ingratiate themselves into the good will of Pharaoh, and that their advice might be the better and the easier taken:

let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God: that is, Moses and his people, grant them their request, that the land may be preserved from ruin; for if things go on long at this rate, utter destruction must ensue:

knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed? as good as ruined, by the plagues that already were come upon it, especially by the last, by the murrain and boils upon the cattle, which destroyed great quantities, and by the hail which had smitten their flax and their barley; or, "must thou first know that Egypt is destroyed?" before thou wilt let the people go; or dost thou first wish, or is it thy pleasure, that it should be first declared to thee that Egypt is destroyed, as Aben Ezra interprets it, before thou wilt grant the dismissal of this people? The Targum of Jonathan is,

"dost thou not yet know, that by his hands the land of Egypt must perish?"

See Gill on "Ex 1:15".

See Gill on "Ex 2:15".

Exodus 10:8

Ver. 8. **And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh,**.... Upon this motion of his ministers, messengers were sent to bring them in again:

and he said, go, serve the Lord your God; as you have often desired:

but who are they that shall go? or, "who and who" {f}? for Pharaoh was unwilling that they should all go, but would have some retained as pledges of their return; for he was

jealous of a design to get out of his country, and never return again, which he could not bear the thoughts of, even of losing such a large number of men he had under his power, and from whom he received so much profit and advantage by their labour.

{f} ymw ym "qui et qui?" Pagninus, Montanus; "quis & quis?" Vatablus.

Exodus 10:9

Ver. 9. **Moses said, we will go with our young and with our old**,.... The latter were necessary to guide, direct, and instruct in the business of sacrifice, and to perform it as heads of their respective families; and the former were to be present, that they might be trained up and inured to such religious services:

with our sons and with our daughters; as with persons of every age, so of every sex, who had all a concern herein, especially as it was a solemn feast, which all were to partake of:

with our flocks and with our herds will we go; which were requisite for the sacrifices, not knowing which they were to sacrifice, and with which to serve God, till they came to the place where they were to sacrifice; see [Ex 10:26](#),

for we [must hold] a feast unto the Lord; which required the presence of old and young, men, women, and children, to join in it, and their flocks and their herds, out of which it was to be made.

Exodus 10:10

Ver. 10. **And he said unto them, let the Lord be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones**,.... Either as mocking them, let the Lord you talk of be with you if he will, and let him deliver you if he can, as I shall let you go with your children, which I never will; or as wishing them ill, that the Lord their God may be with them, as he should dismiss them on their proposal, that is, not at all; he wishes they might never have the presence of the Lord, or receive any from him, till he should dismiss them, which he was determined never to do in the manner they desired; and therefore the sum of his wish or imprecation is, that they might never enjoy any benefits from the Lord; the first sense seems to be best:

look to it, for evil is before you; which is either a charge of sin upon them, that they had an evil design upon him, and intended to raise a mutiny, make an insurrection,

and form a rebellion against him; or a threatening to inflict the evil of punishment upon them, if they would not comply with his terms; and it is as if he should say, be it at your peril if you offer to go away in any other manner than it is my pleasure.

Exodus 10:11

Ver. 11. **Not so,**.... You shall not go with your children as you propose:

go now ye [that are] men, and serve the Lord, for that you did desire; suggesting that that was all they first required, that their men should, go three days into the wilderness, and sacrifice unto the Lord; whereas the demand was, let my people go, [Ex 5:1](#) which were not the men only, but the women and children also, and all were concerned in the service of God, and in keeping a feast to him:

and they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence; by some of his officers, according to his orders.

Exodus 10:12

Ver. 12. **And the Lord said unto Moses, stretch out thine hand over the land of Egypt,**.... First one way, and then another, towards every quarter, and every part of the land, to signify that the following plague would come upon the whole land:

for the locusts, that they may come up upon the land of Egypt; the stretching out of his hand was to be the signal to them to come up and spread themselves over the land, which was brought about by the mighty power of God; for otherwise there was no such virtue in the hand or rod of Moses, to have produced so strange an event:

and eat every herb of the land, even all that the hail hath left; the wheat and the rye, or rice, the grass, herbs, and plants, it had beat down, but not utterly destroyed, as well as some boughs and branches of trees which were left unbroken by it.

Exodus 10:13

Ver. 13. **And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt,**.... His hand, with his rod in it:

and the Lord brought an east wind upon the land, all that day and all that night; all that

day after he had been driven from Pharaoh, and after he had stretched out his hand with his rod in it over Egypt, which was the seventh of the month Abib, and all the night following. This Jehovah did, who holds the winds in his fist, and brings them out of his treasures, whose will they obey, and whose word they fulfil:

and when it was morning; the morrow was come, [Ex 10:4](#) the eighth day of the month Abib:

the east wind brought the locusts; it was usual for these creatures to be taken up and carried with the wind, and brought into countries, as Pliny {g} and other writers attest. In the year 1527, a strong wind brought vast troops of locusts out of Turkey into Poland, which did much mischief; and in the year 1536 a wind from the Euxine Pontus brought such vast numbers of them into Podolia, as that for twenty miles round they devoured everything {h}. The word here used commonly signifies the east wind, and so the Jewish writers unanimously interpret it; and if those locusts were brought from the Red sea, into which they were carried, it must be by an east wind, since the Red sea was east of Egypt; but the Septuagint version renders it the "south wind", and which is approved of by De Dieu on the place, and by Bochart {i}; and the latter supposes these locusts were brought by a south wind out of Ethiopia, which lay to the south of Egypt, and where in the spring of the year, as it now was, were usually great numbers of locusts, and where were a people that lived upon them, as Diodorus Siculus {k} and Strabo {l} relate; who both say that at the vernal equinox, or in the spring, the west and southwest winds blowing strongly brought locusts into those parts; and the south wind being warm might contribute to the production, cherishing, and increasing of these creatures, and which are sometimes brought by a south wind. Dr. Shaw says {m}, the locusts he saw in Barbary, An. 1724 and 1725, were much bigger than our common grasshoppers, and had brown spotted wings, with legs and bodies of a bright yellow; their first appearance was toward the latter end of March, the wind having been for some time from the south.

{g} Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29. {h} Frantzii Hist. Animal. Sacr. par. 5. c. 4. p. 794. {i} Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 1. c. 15. col. 101, 102, & l. 4. c. 3. col. 463. Vid. Jablonski de Terra Goshen, Dissertat. 5. sect. 5. {k} Bibliothec, l. 3. p. 162. {l} Geograph. l. 16. p. 531. {m} Travels, p. 187. Edit. 2.

Exodus 10:14

Ver. 14. **And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt,**.... Being raised up by the wind in the places where they were generated, they flew and spread themselves all over the land, being in a wonderful manner produced and multiplied by the power of God:and rested in all the coasts of Egypt; in every part of it where the Egyptians

dwelt, and where there were meadows, pastures, fields, gardens, orchards; here they lighted and fed, excepting the land of Goshen, where Israel dwelt, which must be thought to be exempted from this plague, as from the rest. Very grievous were they; because of the mischief that they did, and because of their multitude, for they were innumerable, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it, and as it is, Ps 105:34, there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such; there were none before, and there would be none afterwards like them, which Moses knew by a spirit of prophecy. If this is to be understood of their size, they must be very large; in the year 1556, there were locusts at Milain that were a span long, and had six feet, and these like the feet of rats, and there was one four times bigger than the rest, which was taken and kept by a citizen, and would hiss like a serpent when it saw that no food was set before it {n}; yea, Pliny {o} speaks of locusts in India three feet long; and what Moses here says is not contradicted in Joe 2:2 because his words may be understood of the Chaldean army, of which the locusts were an emblem; and besides, each may be restrained to the country in which they were, as that none ever before or since were seen in Egypt as these, though they might be in other countries; and so those in Joel's time were such as never before or since were seen in the land of Judea, though they might be in other places. {n} Frantzii Hist. Animal. Sacr. par. 5. c. 4. p. 800. {o} Ut supra. (Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29.) Exodus 10:15 Ver. 15. For they covered the face of the whole earth,.... Of the whole land of Egypt; and this seems to be the instance in which these locusts differed from all others, that had been or would be, even in their numbers; for though there might have been before, and have been since, such vast numbers of them together as to darken the air and the sun, and by lighting first on one spot, and then on another, have destroyed whole countries; yet never was such an instance known as this, as that they should come in so large a body, and at once to light, and spread, and settle themselves over the whole country. Leo Africanus {p} indeed speaks of a swarm of locusts, which he himself saw at Tagtessa in Africa, A. D. 1510, which covered the whole surface of the ground; but then that was but in one place, but this was a whole country. It is in the original, "they covered the eye of the whole earth"; of which See Gill on "Ex 10:5". so that the land was darkened; the proper colour of the earth, and the green grass on it, could not be seen for them, they lay so thick upon it; and being perhaps of a brown colour, as they often are, the land seemed dark with them: and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees, which the hail had left; for though every herb of the field is said to be smitten, and every tree of the field to be broke with it, Ex 9:25, yet this, as has been observed, is to be understood either hyperbolically, or of the greater part thereof, but not of the whole: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt; the like is said to befall the province of Carpitania, in the ninth year of Childibert, king of France; which was so wasted by locusts, that not a tree, nor a vineyard, nor a forest, nor any sort of fruit, nor any other green thing remained {q}. So Dr. Shaw {r} says of the locusts he saw as above related, that they

let nothing escape them, eating up everything that was green and juicy, not only the lesser kinds of vegetables, but the vine likewise, the fig tree, the pomegranate, the palm, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field. But then such devastations are usually made gradually, by these creatures moving from place to place, whereas this destruction in Egypt was done in one day. Indeed we are told in history, that in one country one hundred and forty acres of land were destroyed in one day {s}; but what is this to all the land of Egypt? with this plague may be compared that of the locusts upon the sounding of the fifth trumpet, Re 9:1. {p} Descriptio Africae, l. 2. p. 117. {q} Frantzii Hist. Animal. Sacr. par. 5. c. 4. p. 802. {r} Ut supra. (Travels, p. 187. Edit. 2.) {s} Frantz. ib. p. 800. Exodus 10:16 Ver. 16. Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste,.... Or, "hastened to call them" {t}; sent messengers in all haste to fetch them, and desire them to come as soon as possible to him. Thus he who a few hours ago drove them from his presence, in a hurry, sends for them to come to him with all speed, which the present circumstances he was in required: and he said to Moses and Aaron: when they were brought into his presence: I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you; against the Lord by disobeying his command, in refusing to let Israel go, when he had so often required it of him; and against Moses and Aaron his ambassadors, whom he had treated with contempt, and had drove them from his presence with disgrace; and against the people of Israel, whom they personated, by retaining them, and using them so ill as he had. This confession did not arise from a true sense of sin, as committed against God, nor indeed does he in it own Jehovah to be his God, only the God of Moses and Aaron, or of the Israelites; but from the fright he was in, and fear of punishment continued upon him, to the utter ruin of him and his people. {t} arql-rhmyw "et festinavit ad vocandum", Montanus; "festinavit accersere", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. Exodus 10:17 Ver. 17. Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin, only this once,.... Pretending that he would never offend any more, and if he did, he did not desire it should be forgiven him, but that due punishment should be inflicted on him. These words are directed to Moses, he being the principal person that came to him with a commission from the Lord, and who was made a god to Pharaoh; and therefore he does not ask forgiveness of the Lord, but of Moses: and entreat the Lord your God, that he may take away from me this death only; this deadly plague of the locusts, which devouring all the fruits of the earth, must in course produce a famine, and that the death of men. Moreover, the author of the book of Wisdom says, that the bites of the locusts killed men, "For them the bitings of grasshoppers and flies killed, neither was there found any remedy for their life: for they were worthy to be punished by such." (Wisdom 16:9) Pharaoh was sensible that this plague came from God, and that he only could remove it; and therefore begs the prayers of Moses and Aaron to him for the removal of it, and suggests that he would never desire such another favour; but that if he offended again, and another plague was inflicted on him, he could not desire it to be taken away; by which he would be understood, that he determined to offend no more, or give them any occasion for any other judgment to

come upon him, was he once clear of this. Exodus 10:18 Ver. 18. And he went out from Pharaoh,.... Without the city, as he had been wont to do: and entreated the Lord; prayed to him that he would remove the plague of the locusts from the land. Exodus 10:19 Ver. 19. And the Lord turned a mighty strong west wind,.... He turned the wind the contrary way it before blew; it was an east wind that brought the locusts, but now it was changed into a west wind, or "a wind of the sea" {u}, of the Mediterranean sea; a wind which blew from thence, which lay to the west of Egypt, as the Red sea did to the east of it, to which the locusts were carried by the wind as follows: which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red sea; and as it is usual for locusts to be brought by winds, so to be carried away with them, and to be let fall into seas, lakes, and pools, and there perish. So Pliny says {w} of locusts, that being taken up and carried with the wind in flocks or swarms, they fell into seas and lakes; and Jerom observes {x} in his time, that they had seen swarms of locusts cover the land of Judea, which upon the wind rising have been driven into the first and last seas; that is, into the Dead sea, and into the Mediterranean sea; see Joe 2:20. This sea here called the Red sea is the same which is now called the Arabian gulf; in the original text it is the sea of Suph; that is, the sea of flags or rushes; as the word is rendered, Ex 2:3 from the great numbers of these growing on the banks of it, which are full of them, as Thevenot {y} says; or the "sea of weeds" {z}, from the multitude of them in the bottom of it, or floating on it. So Columbus found in the Spanish West Indies, on the coast of Paria, a sea full of herbs, or weeds {a}, which grew so thick, that they sometimes in a manner stopped the ships. Some render Yam Suph, the sea of bushes; and some late travellers {b} observe, that though, in the dreadful wilds along this lake, one sees neither tree, shrub, nor vegetable, except a kind of bramble, yet it is remarkable that they are found in the sea growing on its bottom, where we behold with astonishment whole groves of trees blossoming and bearing fruit, as if nature by these marine vegetables meant to compensate for the extreme sterility reigning in all the deserts of Arabia; and with this agrees the account that Pliny {c} gives of the Red sea, that in it olives and green fruit trees grow; yea, he says that that and all the Eastern ocean is full of woods; and adds, it is wonderful that in the Red sea woods live, especially the laurel, and the olive bearing berries. Hillerus {d} thinks this sea here has the name of the sea of Suph from a city of the same name near unto it. It is often called the Red sea in profane authors as here, not from the coral that grew in it, or the red sand at the bottom of it, or red mountains near it; though Thevenot {e} says, there are some mountains all over red on the sides of it; nor from the shade of those mountains upon it; nor from the appearance of it through the rays of the sun upon it; and much less from the natural colour of it; which, as Curtius {f} observes, does not differ from others; though a late traveller says {g}, that "on several parts of this sea (the Red sea) we observed abundance of reddish spots made by a weed resembling "cargaco" (or Sargosso) rooted in the bottom, and floating in some places: upon strict examination, it proved to be that which we found the Ethiopians call Sufo (as here Suph), used up and down for

dying their stuffs and clothes of a red colour,"but the Greeks called it so from Erythras or Erythrus, a king that reigned in those parts {h}, whose name signifies red; and it is highly probable the same with Esau, who is called Edom, that is, red, from the red pottage he sold his birthright for to Jacob; and this sea washing his country, Idumea or Edom, was called the Red sea from thence; and here the locusts were cast by the wind, or "fixed" {i}, as a tent is fixed, as the word signifies, and there continued, and never appeared more:there remained not one locust in all the coasts of Egypt; so that the removal of them was as great a miracle as the bringing them at first: this was done about the ninth day of the month Abib. {u} My xwr "venture maris", Montanus, Drusius. {w} Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29. {x} Comment. in Joel, ii. 20. {y} Travels into the Levant, B. 2. ch. 33. p. 175. {z} Pwo hmy "in mare algosum", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; "in mare carectosum", Tigurine version. {a} P. Martyr. de Angleria, Decad. 1. l. 6. Vide Decad. 3. 5. {b} Egmont and Heyman's Travels, vol. 2. p. 158. {c} Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 103. l. 13. c. 25. {d} Onomastic. Sacr. p. 128. {e} Ut supra. (Travels into the Levant, B. 2. ch. 33. p. 175.) {f} Hist. l. 8. sect. 9. {g} Hieronymo Lobo's Observations, &c. in Ray's Travels, vol. 2. p. 489. {h} Curtius ut supra. (Hist. l. 8. sect. 9.). Mela de Situ Orbis, l. 3. c. 8. Strabo, l. 16. p. 535, 536. {i} wheqtyw "et fixit eam", Montanus; so Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Ainsworth. Exodus 10:20Ver. 20. But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart,.... For as yet he had not brought all his judgments on him he designed to bring:so that he would not let the children of Israel go: though he had promised to do it, and that he would never offend more in this way. Exodus 10:21Ver. 21. And the Lord said unto Moses,.... About the eleventh day of the month Abib:stretch out thine hand toward heaven; where the luminaries are, and from whence light comes:that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt; that is, what caused it, the gross vapours and thick fogs; for otherwise darkness itself, being a privation of light, cannot be felt: Onkelos paraphrases it,"after that the darkness of the night is removed;"so Jonathan; that it might appear to be different from that, and be much grosser. Exodus 10:22Ver. 22. And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven, and there was a thick darkness over all the land of Egypt three days. The eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth days of the month Abib; with this compare the fifth vial, Re 16:10. Exodus 10:23Ver. 23. They saw not one another,.... Not only the luminaries of heaven were covered and beclouded with the darkness, so that they were of no use to them; but the fogs and vapours which occasioned it were so damp and clammy that they put out their fires, lamps, and candles, so that they could receive no benefit from them:neither rose up any from his place for three days; from the place of his habitation, not being able to find the way to the door, or however not able to do any business abroad; and besides were quite amazed and confounded, supposing the course of nature was changed and all things going to a dissolution, their consciences filled with horror and terror and black despair, strange and terrible phantoms and apparitions presented to their minds, as the author of the book of Wisdom

suggests, "No power of the fire might give them light: neither could the bright flames of the stars endure to lighten that horrible night." (Wisdom 17:5) and which is countenanced by what the psalmist says, who instead of this plague of darkness, takes notice of evil angels being sent among them, Ps 78:49 that is, devils in horrible shapes represented to their minds, which dreadfully distressed and terrified them, so that they durst not stir and move from the place where they were: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings; not only in the land of Goshen, but in all places where they were mixed with the Egyptians, as it is plain they were, from Ex 10:23 so that they could go about their business, and perform it as at other times, and had now a fine opportunity of packing up their goods, and getting every thing ready for their departure, without being observed by the Egyptians. Doctor Lightfoot {k} thinks, that now they attended to the ordinance of circumcision, which had been generally neglected, and was necessary to their partaking of the passover, which in a few days was to be observed, and of which no uncircumcised person might eat, Ex 12:48 and which he grounds upon Ps 105:28, and this time was wisely taken for it, when the Egyptians could have no opportunity or advantage against them, because of their soreness by it; it may indeed be wondered at, that they did not take the advantage of the darkness the Egyptians were in, of getting out of the land, and going their three days' journey into the wilderness; but it was the will of God that they should not steal away privately, or go by flight as fugitives, but openly, and with the mighty hand and outstretched arm of God; besides, the Lord had not as yet wrought all the judgments he intended. In the fabulous expedition of Bacchus against the Indians, a story is told which seems to be taken from hence, that the Indians were covered with darkness, while those with Bacchus were in light all around them {l}. {k} Works, vol. 1. p. 707. {l} Vid. Huet. Quaest. Alnetan. l. 2. c. 13. sect. 12. p. 204. Exodus 10:24 Ver. 24. And Pharaoh called unto Moses,.... After the three days, as the Targum of Jonathan, when the darkness was over, or at least much diminished, fearing that still worse evils would befall him: and said, go ye, serve the Lord, only let your flocks and your herds be stayed; stopped or remained behind, as a pledge and security of their return; and these the rather he was desirous of retaining, because of the great loss of cattle he had sustained by the murrain and boils upon them, and by the hail: let your little ones also go with you; this he had refused before, but now consents to it, which he thought was doing them a great favour, and that upon such terms they might be content to go. Exodus 10:25 Ver. 25. And Moses said, thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings,.... Sheep, rams, and goats for sacrifices, and oxen for burnt offerings; and that of his own, as Jarchi interprets it; but rather the meaning is, that besides having their little ones with them, they must be allowed also to take their cattle for sacrifices and burnt offerings: that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God; might have wherewith to offer up in sacrifice to him as he shall require. Exodus 10:26 Ver. 26. Our cattle also shall go with us,.... Of every kind, of the flocks and of the herds: there shall not an hoof be left behind; not a single creature that has an hoof: it is a

proverbial expression, signifying that they should carry all that belonged to them with them:for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God; something of every kind and sort, all they had being devoted to his service, and to be yielded to him upon demand:and we know not with what we must serve the Lord, until we come thither; into the wilderness; they knew not exactly and precisely what kind of creatures or how many of them, as Aben Ezra observes, they were to offer at a time; for though before this there was a known distinction between clean and unclean creatures, and the various offerings and sacrifices of the patriarchs might in a good measure direct them in the use of them; yet the special and peculiar laws about sacrifices were not given until after their deliverance, and they were got into the wilderness; so that this was not a bare pretence to get their cattle along with them, but was the true case and real matter of fact. Exodus 10:27Ver. 27. But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart,... Yet more and more:and he would not let them go; his heart was set against it, his will was resolute, and he was determined never to let them go. Exodus 10:28Ver. 28. And Pharaoh said unto him,... To Moses:get thee from me; be gone from my presence, I have nothing more to say to thee, or do with thee:take heed to thyself; lest mischief befall thee from me, or those about me:see my face no more; neither here nor elsewhere:for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die; this was a foolish as well as a wicked speech, when he lay at the mercy of Moses, rather than Moses at his; he being made a god unto him, and had such power to inflict plagues upon him, of which he had had repeated instances. Exodus 10:29Ver. 29. And Moses said, thou hast spoken well,... Not that which was good, in a moral sense, for it was very wicked, but what would eventually prove true:I will see thy face again no more; which may be understood either conditionally, except he was sent for, and he desired to see him, he would not come of himself; or absolutely knowing by a spirit of prophecy that he should be no more sent unto him, and that Pharaoh should in a little time be drowned in the Red sea, when he would be seen no more by him nor any other; for as for what is said in the following chapter, it is thought by many to have been said at this time, as it might even before he went out of the presence of Pharaoh, which in Ex 11:8 he is said to do in anger: and as for Pharaoh's calling for him at midnight, and bidding him rise and begone, Ex 12:31 it might be delivered by messengers, and so he be not seen by Moses and Aaron. By this speech of Moses, it appears he was not afraid of Pharaoh and his menaces, but rather taunts at him, and it is to this fearless disposition of Moses at this time that the apostle refers in Heb 11:27.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 11:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 11

Moses having an intimation from the Lord that one plague more would be brought on Pharaoh, and then he would let Israel go, when they should borrow of their neighbours jewels of gold and silver, the people being in great favour with the Egyptians, [Ex 11:1](#), he declares to Pharaoh, before he went out of his presence, the slaying of all the firstborn in Egypt, which would issue in the dismissal of Israel, and then he went out from him in great anger, [Ex 11:4](#), but still Pharaoh would not hearken, and his heart was hardened, and he refused again to let Israel go, [Ex 10:9](#).

Ver. 1. **And the Lord said unto Moses**,.... While in the presence of Pharaoh, by a secret impulse upon his mind; or he had said {m}, which some refer as far back as to his appearance to him in Midian, [Ex 4:23](#), which is too remote; rather it refers to the last time he went to Pharaoh, being sent for by him; and the words may be rendered, "for the Lord had said" {n}; and so are a reason why Moses was so bold, and expressed himself with so much confidence and assurance to Pharaoh, that he would see his face no more:

yet will I bring one plague [more] upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; upon him and all his subjects, for the following one would affect all the families of Egypt, in which there was a son:

afterwards he will let you go hence; out of Egypt readily, at once, and not attempt to stop or retard your going:

when he shall let you go; declare his will, give leave and orders for it:

he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether; absolutely, entirely, without any exception or limitation, them, their wives, their children, their flocks and herds, and whatsoever belonged to them, without any restraint upon them in any respect, and without any condition of return, or fixing any time for it, but the dismissal should be general, unlimited, and unconditional; or, "in thrusting he shall thrust you out" {o}, with force and vehemence, with urgency and in great haste.

{m} rmayw "dixerat", some in Vatablus, Ainsworth, Cartwright; so Aben Ezra. {n} "Dixerat enim", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Rivet. {o} vrgy vrg "expellendo expellet", Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius; so Fagius, Vatablus, Cartwright.

Exodus 11:2

Ver. 2. **Speak now in the ears of the people**,.... This cannot be understood of the whole body of the people being gathered together, but of some of the principal ones, who should communicate it to others, and so from one to another, until all the heads and masters of families became acquainted with it:

and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold; to ornament themselves with at the feast they were going to keep: the Samaritan and Septuagint versions add, and clothing or raiment, and such it is certain they did borrow, [Ex 12:35](#) or vessels {p} of different forms, made of gold and silver, such as were fit and proper to be used at sacrifices and feasts, and which will account for the vessels given by princes, [Nu 7:1](#) for the doing of which the divine authority was sufficient; though there seems to be a reason for it in justice, that they might be paid for their hard service they had been made to serve for so many years, without having a proper reward for it: the word may be rendered, "let every man ask", &c.

{p} ylk skeuh Sept. "vasa", V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Piscator, Drusius; "instrumenta", Junius & Tremellius.

Exodus 11:3

Ver. 3. **And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians**,.... So that they freely and willingly lent them the things they asked of them; which seems to be said by way of anticipation, for this was not done until the following plague was inflicted, see

[Ex 12:35](#),

moreover, the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt; his name was famous throughout the whole land, because of the signs and wonders, and miracles wrought by him; they took him to be a very extraordinary person, as he was, and had him in great esteem, because at his entreaty the plagues were removed from them, when they had been wrought on them; and this made them the more willing to lend the above things to the people of Israel when they asked them of them, because of their great respect to Moses, and whom, if they did not cordially love, yet they feared, and might imagine that if they did not comply with the request of his people, he might resent it, and employ his power against them; and thus he stood, either beloved or feared, or

both,

in the sight of Pharaoh's servants; his ministers, courtiers, and counsellors: and in the sight of the people; the common people, the inhabitants of the land of Egypt.

Exodus 11:4

Ver. 4. **And Moses said**,.... To Pharaoh before he left him, when he had told him he should see his face no more; for the three preceding verses are to be read in a parenthesis, being placed here by the historian, as giving some light to this last discourse and transaction between Moses and Pharaoh:

thus saith the Lord, about midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt; perhaps to the capital and metropolis of it, which might stand in the midst of it, as usually does the royal city; or it may only signify that he would go into the very heart of it, and steer his course all around in every part and quarter of it, slaying the firstborn everywhere in all towns and cities throughout the kingdom, as follows; in order to which he is said to go out, either from the place where Moses used to go and pray to him, and where he met him and gave him his orders and instructions, or out of the land of Goshen, where he dwelt among the Israelites; or rather it only signifies the manifestation of himself in some work and action of his, the exertion of his power in inflicting punishment for sin: thus God is sometimes said to go forth out of his place when he is about to exercise judgment in the earth; for this must be understood consistent with his omnipresence, see [Isa 26:21](#) and this was to be done about midnight, the middle of the night following the present day, which was the fourteenth of the month of Abib or Nisan; it was in the morning of that day Moses had this discourse with Pharaoh, and in the evening of it the passover was kept, and about the middle of the night the firstborn were slain, as follows.

Exodus 11:5

Ver. 5. **And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die**,.... By the destroying angel inflicting a disease upon them, as Josephus says {q}, very probably the pestilence; however, it was sudden and immediate death, and which was universal, reaching to all the firstborn that were in the families of the Egyptians in all parts of the kingdom:

from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne: this periphrasis, "that sitteth upon his throne", either belongs to Pharaoh, and is a description of him who now sat upon the throne of Egypt; and the Septuagint version leaves out the pronoun "his";

and so it is the same as if it had been said the firstborn of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; or else, to the firstborn, and describes him who either already sat upon the throne with his father, as was sometimes the case, that the firstborn was taken a partner in the throne, in the lifetime of his father; or who was the presumptive heir of the crown, and should succeed him, and so the Targum of Jonathan,

"who shall or is to sit upon the throne of his kingdom:"

even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; or "behind the two mills" {r}, or "two millstones"; for it was the custom then, as with the Arabs now, as Doctor Shaw relates {s}, to grind their corn with hand mills, which were two stones laid on one another, and in the uppermost was a handle, with which it was turned about by women, between whom the two stones were placed, and so they might be said to be behind them; though the phrase used does not necessarily suppose that they sat behind the mill, for it may as well be rendered "by" or "near the mill" {t}: this is not to be understood of the firstborn, as behind the mill, or at it, and grinding, as Aben Ezra interpret's it, but of the maidservant; it being the business of such in early times to turn these mills, and grind corn, as it is now in Arabia, as the above traveller relates; and so it was in Judea, in the times of Christ, [Mt 24:41](#) and Homer {u}, in his times, speaks of women grinding at the mill, See Gill on "Mt 24:41", the design of these expressions is to show that none would escape this calamity threatened, neither the king nor his nobles, nor any of his subjects, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free: and all the firstborn of beasts: such as had escaped the plagues of the murrain and boils: this is added, not because they were such as were worshipped as gods, as Jarchi observes, but to increase their misery and aggravate their punishment, these being their property and substance, and became scarce and valuable, through the preceding plagues of the murrain, boils, and hail, which destroyed many of their cattle.

{q} Antiqu. l. 2. c. 14. sect. 6. {r} Myxrh rxa "post molas", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; "after the mill stones", Ainsworth. {s} Travels, p. 231. Ed. 2. {t} para to mulon, Sept. "ad molam", V. L. "apud molas", Noldius, p. 11. No. 75. {u} men aleteousi mulhv, &c. Homer. Odyss. 7. l. 109.

[Exodus 11:6](#)

Ver. 6. **And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt**,.... Of parents for the loss of their firstborn sons, their heirs, the support and glory of their families; children for the loss of their elder brethren; and servants for the loss of the prime and principal in their masters' houses; and all in a dreadful fright, expecting instantly death

themselves:

such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more; for though the later destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea might be a greater loss, yet not occasion greater mourning; since that was only a loss of military persons, and did not affect at least so many families as this; and though their king was lost also, it might not give them so much concern, since through his ill conduct, his hardness and obstinacy, he had been the means of so many plagues inflicted on them.

Exodus 11:7

Ver. 7. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast,.... That is, as no hurt should be done to man or beast among them, to the firstborn of either of them, so there would be no noise or cry in their dwellings, but the profoundest silence, stillness, and quietness among them; though this is generally understood of what would be their case when on their march departing out of Egypt, which was immediately upon the slaying of the firstborn; and, if literally understood, it was a very extraordinary thing that a dog, which barks at the least noise that is made, especially in the night, yet not one should move his tongue or bark, or rather "sharpen" {u} his tongue, snarl and grin, when 600,000 men, besides women and children, with their flocks and herds, set out on their journey, and must doubtless march through many places where dogs were, before they came to the Red sea; though it may also be interpreted figuratively, that not an Egyptian, though ever so spiteful and malicious, and ill disposed to the children of Israel, should offer to do any hurt either to the Israelites or their cattle, or exclaim against them on account of the slaughter of their firstborn, or say one word against their departure, or attempt to stop them, but on the contrary would hasten their going, and be urgent for it:

that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel; by preserving them and theirs, when the firstborn of Egypt were destroyed, and by causing stillness and quietness among them when there was an hideous outcry and doleful lamentation among the Egyptians; and by bringing Israel quietly out from among them, none offering to give the least molestation.

{u} Urxy al non acuet, Noldius, p. 517. No. 1471. so Jarchi.

Exodus 11:8

Ver. 8. And all these thy servants,.... Pharaoh's nobles, ministers, courtiers and

counsellors, who were then in his presence, and stood about him, to whom Moses pointed:

shall come down unto me; from Pharaoh's palace, which might be built on an eminence, to the place where Moses had dwelt during the time he had been in Egypt, which might lie lower; or these should come from Zoan, or from Memphis, whichever of them was now the royal city, to the land of Goshen, which lay lower than the other part of Egypt; or it may only denote the submission of Pharaoh's, servants, that they should in the time of their distress be so humble and condescending as to come themselves to Moses, and as it follows:

and bow down themselves unto me; in the most obsequious manner, humbly entreating, and earnestly begging him:

saying, get thee out, and all the people that follow thee; or "are at thy feet" {w}, that were at his beck and command, and under his power, as Aben Ezra; or that followed his counsel and advice, as Jarchi, that did as he directed them, and went after him as their leader and commander, even everyone of them; they that brought up the rear, he, and all of them, would be desired to depart, and not a man remain behind: this was fulfilled, [Ex 12:31](#):

and after that I will go out; out of the land of Egypt, Moses, and all the children of Israel:

and he went out from Pharaoh in a great anger; as soon as he had said the above words, because he had bid him be gone from him, and had threatened him with his life, if ever he saw his face more; and because he was so rebellious against God, whose zeal inspired the heart of Moses with indignation against him, though the meekest man on earth, and for whose glory he was concerned; though some understand this of Moses going out from Pharaoh, when he and not Moses was in great anger, because of what Moses had now threatened him with, and told him what would be the issue of things, the submission of him and his nobles, and the dismissal of Israel; but this sense is not favoured by the accents.

{w} Kylgrb "in pedibus tuis", Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius; "sub pedibus tuis", Munster, Vatablus; "qui est ad pedes tuos", Cartwright.

[Exodus 11:9](#)

Ver. 9. **And the Lord said unto Moses**,.... Not at this time when he went out from

Pharaoh, but some time before this, for the words may be rendered, "the Lord had said" {x}, for so he had, as is related, [Ex 7:3](#), but the historian makes mention of it here, to show that Moses was not ignorant of the event of things; he knew that Pharaoh's heart would be hardened from time to time, and that one plague after another must be inflicted, before he would let the people go; and therefore when he prayed for the removal of any, it was not in expectation that he would abide by his promise, but to do the will of God, and the duty of his calling:

Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; to Moses and Aaron, and let the people of Israel go as required of him:

that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt; which Jarchi interprets of the smiting of the firstborn, dividing the waters of the Red sea, and the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in it; but since these words were said before any of the plagues, were inflicted, it may refer to them all.

{x} rmayw "dixerat autem", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Rivet.

[Exodus 11:10](#)

Ver. 10. **And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh,** &c,] Which are related in the preceding chapters:

and the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart: one time after another, and yet more and more:

so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land; until the last plague, the slaying of the firstborn, was brought upon him and his people, related in the following chapter.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 12:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 12

This chapter begins with observing, that the month in which the above wonders were wrought in Egypt, and the following ordinance appointed to the Israelites, should hereafter be reckoned the first month in the year, [Ex 12:1](#) on the tenth day of which a lamb here described was to be taken and kept till the fourteenth, and then slain, and its blood sprinkled on the posts of the houses of the Israelites, [Ex 12:3](#), the manner of dressing and eating it is shown, [Ex 12:8](#) and the reason of the institution of this ordinance being given, [Ex 12:12](#), and an order to eat unleavened bread during seven days, in which the feast was to be kept, [Ex 12:15](#), directions are also given for the immediate observance of it, and particularly about the sprinkling of the blood of the lamb, and the use of it, [Ex 12:21](#), and this ordinance, which they were to instruct their children in, was to be kept by them in succeeding ages for ever, [Ex 12:24](#) about the middle of the night it was first observed, all the firstborn in Egypt were slain, which made the Egyptians urgent upon the Israelites to depart in haste, [Ex 12:28](#) and which they did with their unleavened dough, and with great riches they had borrowed of the Egyptians, [Ex 12:34](#), the number of the children of Israel at the time of their departure, the mixed multitude and cattle that went with them, their baking their unleavened cakes, the time of their sojourning in Egypt, and of their coming out of it that night, which made it a remarkable one, are all particularly taken notice of, [Ex 12:37](#), laws and rules are given concerning the persons that should partake of the passover, [Ex 12:43](#) and the chapter is concluded with observing, that it was kept according to the command of God, and that it was on the same day it was first instituted and kept that Israel were brought out of Egypt, [Ex 12:50](#).

Ver. 1. **And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt,**.... Before they and the children of Israel came out of it, before the slaying of the firstborn, yea, before Moses came from the presence of Pharaoh, and had given him notice of it; and it is very probable even before the three days darkness, seeing it seems necessary it should be four days before the passover, since on the tenth day the lamb was to be taken, and on the fourteenth slain, [Ex 12:3](#) and by what follows it looks as if it was at the beginning or first day of the month, and so the words may be rendered, "the Lord had spoke" {y}; and the following account is deferred to this place, that there might be no interruption of the history of the plagues, and that the passover, with all its rites and ceremonies, both at the first institution and observance of it, and in later times, might be laid together.

{y} rmayw "alloquutus antem fuerat", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; "dixerat autem"; so some in Drusius, and Ainsworth.

Exodus 12:2

Ver. 2. **This month shall be unto you the beginning of months**,.... Not only the first, as after expressed, but the chief and principal of them, now famous for their coming out of Egypt in it, and would be more so for the sufferings and death of the Messiah, and redemption by him from sin, Satan, and the world, law, hell, and death, for he suffered at the time of the passover. This month was called Abib, [Ex 13:4](#), which signifies an ear of corn, and at this time we find that the barley was in ear, [Ex 9:31](#) which clearly shows in what month the above things were transacted; afterwards it was called Nisan, which seems to be the Chaldean name for it, [Ne 2:1](#): it shall be the first month of the year to you; which before was the seventh; while the Israelites were in Egypt they observed the same beginning of the year and course of months as the Egyptians, as Josephus {z} intimates; and with the Egyptians, the month Thot was the first month, which answered to Tisri with the Jews, and both to our September, or a part of it, so that the beginning of the year was then in the autumnal equinox, at which season it is thought the world was created; but now to the Israelites it was changed unto the vernal equinox, for this month of Abib or Nisan answers to part of our March and part of April; though indeed both beginnings of the year were observed by them, the one on ecclesiastic, the other on civil accounts; or, as Josephus {a} expresses it, the month of Nisan was the beginning with respect to things divine, but in buying and selling, and such like things, the ancient order was observed; and so the Targum of Jonathan here paraphrases it,

"from hence ye shall begin to reckon the feasts, the times, and the revolutions."

Indeed the Jews had four beginnings of the year according to their Misnah {b}; the first of Nisan (or March) was the beginning of the year for kings and for festivals; the first of Elul (or August) for the tithing of cattle; the first of Tisri (or September) for the sabbatical years, jubilees, and planting of trees and herbs; and the first of Shebet (or January) for the tithing the fruit of trees.

{z} Antiqu. l. 1. c. 3. sect. 3. {a} Antiqu. l. 1. c. 3. sect. 3. {b} Misn. Roshhashanah, c. 1. sect. 1.

Exodus 12:3

Ver. 3. **Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel**,.... That is, to the elders of the people, and heads of families; unless we can suppose that they had been gradually gathered, and were now gathered together in a body by the direction of Moses, by whom they were assured that their departure was at hand; and the rather it may be thought that so it was, since the following order concerned the whole and every individual:

saying, in the tenth [day] of this month; the month Abib or Nisan, which shows that this direction must be given before that day, and so very probably on the first of the month, as before observed:

they shall take to them every man a lamb; not every individual person, but every master of a family, or head of an house, as follows:

according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house; if large enough to eat up a whole lamb, otherwise they were to do as next directed: the Targum of Jonathan suggests, that this direction of taking a lamb to them on the tenth day of the month was only for this time, and not for following ages; and so the Jewish doctors {c} commonly understand it as being peculiar to the passover in Egypt, and not in later times; for they {d} say,

"what difference is there between the passover in Egypt, and the passover in later ages? the passover in Egypt was taken within the tenth day, and was obliged to sprinkling with a bunch of hyssop upon the lintel, and upon the two side posts, and was eaten with haste in one night, but the passover in later ages was kept all the seven days."

The ground and reason of this special direction for taking up a lamb on the tenth day was, that they might have a lamb ready; and that through the multiplicity of business, and the hurry they would be in at their departure, they might not forget it, and neglect it; and that they might have time enough to examine whether it had all the prerequisites and qualifications that were necessary; and that while they had it in view, they might be led to meditate upon, and talk of, expect and firmly believe their deliverance; yea, that their faith might be directed to a far greater deliverance by the Messiah, which this was only typical of, [Heb 11:28](#) but some of these reasons would hold good in later times, and it seems by some circumstances that this rule was attended to.

{c} Ben Gersom in loc. Maimon. Korban Pesach. c. 10. sect. 15. {d} Misn. Pesach. c. 9. sect. 5.

Exodus 12:4

Ver. 4. **And if the household be too little for the lamb**,.... That they cannot eat it up at once;

let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; which Josephus {e} says were never fewer than ten, and were often twenty, but no man might feast alone; with which agrees the Jewish canon {f},

"they do not kill the passover lamb for a single person, nor even for a society consisting of one hundred, that cannot eat the quantity of an olive:"

every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb: that is, a man must reckon up how many he has in his own house to eat of the lamb, and what their appetites be, by which he will be able to judge whether he can dispense with a lamb himself, or whether he must take in some of his neighbours, and how many, so as to eat up the whole lamb, for, for such persons the lamb was to be slain. The rule is,

"if a man slays it for those that do not eat of it, or for those that are not counted, for the uncircumcised, and the unclean, it was wrong, and not allowed of {g}."

The taking in his neighbours may respect the call of the Gentiles to partake of Christ with the Jews, see [Eph 3:5](#).

{e} De Bello Jud. 1. 6. c. 9. sect. 3. {f} Misn. Pesach. c. 8. sect. 7. {g} Ibid. c. 5. sect. 3.

Exodus 12:5

Ver. 5. **Your lamb shall be without blemish**,.... Without any spot or defect in it. Maimonides {h} reckons no less than fifty blemishes in a creature, anyone of which makes it unfit for sacrifice, see

[Le 21:21](#). This lamb was a type of Christ, who is therefore said to be our passover sacrificed for us, [1Co 5:7](#) comparable to a lamb for his innocence and harmlessness, for his meekness, humility, and patience, for usefulness both for food and raiment, as well as for being fit for sacrifice; and who is a lamb without spot and blemish, either of original sin, or actual transgression, holy in his nature, harmless in his life:

a male of the first year; anyone within that time, but not beyond it; denoting the strength and vigour of Christ, in the flower of his age, his short continuance among men, and his being tender and savoury food for the faith of his people:

ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats; it might be either a lamb, or a kid of the goats; for the most part, or generally, it was a lamb that was taken; so the Jewish canon runs {i},

"he that says to his servant, go and slay for me the passover, if he slays a kid he may eat it; if he slays a lamb he may eat of it; if he slays a kid and a lamb, he may eat of the first."

The goat being of an ill smell may denote Christ being made sin, and a sin offering for his people; and the taking of a lamb from these may signify the choice of Christ from among the people in the council and covenant of God; the preordination of him to be the lamb slain from the foundation of the world; the preservation of him from the infection of sin in his incarnation, and the separation of him from sinners in his conversation.

{h} Hilchot Biath Hamikdash, c. 7. sect. 1. {i} Misn. Pesach. c. 8. sect. 2.

Exodus 12:6

Ver. 6. And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month,.... In their houses; this may denote the preservation of Christ in his infancy, and to the appointed time of his sufferings and death; and it is remarkable, that on this very day, the tenth of Nisan, four days before the passover, and so as many days before his sufferings and death, he made his entry into Jerusalem, near to which he was to be offered up, [Joh 12:1](#):

and the whole assembly of the congregation shall kill it in the evening; that is, of the fourteenth of Nisan; not between the two suns, as the Targum of Jonathan, between the sun setting and the sun rising; nor between the setting of the sun, and the entire disappearance of its rays of light reflecting in the air and clouds after it, as Aben Ezra; so it is said in the Talmud {k}, after the sun is set, all the time that the face of the east is red; others say as long as a man can walk half a mile after sun setting; and others, the twinkling of an eye; but "between the two evening's" {l}, as it may be rendered; which respects that space of time after the sun begins to decline, and the entire setting of it; when the sun begins to decline, as it does after noon, that is the first evening, and when it is set, that is the second; and the middle space between the one and the other

is about the ninth hour of the day, according to the Jewish computation, and, with us, about three o'clock in the afternoon, about which time the passover used to be killed; for they say {m},

"the daily sacrifice was slain at eight and a half, and offered at the ninth; but on the evening of the passover it was slain at seven and a half, and offered at eight and a half, whether on a common day, or on a sabbath; and if the evening of the passover happened to be on the evening of the sabbath, it was slain at six and a half, and offered up at seven and a half, and after that the passover;"

which was done, that there might be time before the last evening for the slaying of the passover lamb. Josephus {n} says, at the passover they slew the sacrifice from the ninth hour to the eleventh;

See Gill on "Mt 26:17", and it being at the ninth hour that our Lord was crucified, the agreement between him and the paschal lamb in this circumstance very manifestly appears, [Mt 27:46](#) though it may also in general denote Christ's appearing in the last days, in the end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself: the slaying of the paschal lamb is ascribed to the "whole assembly of the congregation", because it was to be slain by their order, and in their name, for their use, and they present; and thus the crucifixion of Christ, his sufferings and death, are attributed to the men of Israel, and all the house of Israel, [Ac 2:22](#).

{k} T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 34. 2. {l} Mybreh Nyb "inter duas vespervas", Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Ainsworth. {m} Misn. Pesach. c. 5. sect. 1. {n} De Bello Jud. 1. 6. c. 9. sect. 3.

[Exodus 12:7](#)

Ver. 7. [And they shall take of the blood](#),.... Of the lamb, being received into a basin, [Ex 12:22](#):

[and strike it on the two side posts](#); with a bunch of hyssop dipped into it:

[and on the upper doorpost of the houses, wherein they shall eat it](#); but not on the posts of those houses, the inhabitants of which joined with their neighbours in eating it; though Levi Ben Gersom thinks they were sprinkled as the rest; but to what purpose, when there were no Israelites, and no firstborn in them? the two side posts were the posts of a folding door, on which the two folds were hung, and the upper doorpost is what is afterwards called the lintel, [Ex 12:23](#) and has its name in Hebrew from looking out; for, as Aben Ezra says, there was a window over the door, as is the

custom throughout the whole country of the Ishmaelites or Arabians; and so Schindler says {o}, which perhaps he took from him, that the word signifies either a lintel, or a little window over the door, through which it might be seen who called or knocked at the door; and adds, in Egypt, as now in Arabia, there were windows over the doors of houses. The sprinkling the blood of the paschal lamb was typical of the sprinkling of the blood of Christ upon the hearts and consciences of his people, and of their peace, safety, and security by it from the wrath of God, and the vengeance of divine justice; of the further use of this rite, see

[Ex 12:22](#), Aben Ezra mentions it as the opinion of some, that the sprinkling of the blood on those places was to show that they slew the abomination of the Egyptians openly; but he himself gives a much better reason for this rite, namely, that it was to be a propitiation for everyone that ate in the house, and was a sign to the destroyer, that he might look upon it in like manner, as it is said [Eze 9:4](#), "set a mark, &c." this seems to be peculiar to the passover in Egypt, and was not used in later times.

{o} Lex. Pentaglott. col. 1938.

[Exodus 12:8](#)

Ver. 8. **And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire,**.... The night of the fourteenth of Nisan; and as the Jews reckoned their days from the evening preceding, this must be the beginning of the fifteenth day, which being observed, will serve to reconcile some passages relating to this ordinance. The lamb was to be roasted, not only because its flesh thereby would be more palatable and savoury, but because soonest dressed that way, their present circumstances requiring haste; but chiefly to denote the sufferings of Christ, the antitype of it, when he endured the wrath of God, poured out as fire upon him; and also to show, that he is to be fed upon by faith, which works by love, or to be received with hearts inflamed with love to him:

and unleavened bread; this also was to be eaten at the same time, and for seven days running, even to the twenty first day of the month,

[Ex 12:15](#), where see more concerning this: the reason of this also was, because they were then in haste, and could not stay to leaven the dough that was in their troughs; and was significative of the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, with which the true passover lamb is to be eaten, in opposition to the leaven of error, hypocrisy, and malice, [1Co 5:7](#):

and with bitter herbs they shall eat it; the Vulgate Latin version renders it, "with wild lettuces", which are very bitter; and the worst sort of which, for bitterness, Pliny says {p}, is what they call "picris", which has its name from the bitterness of it, and is the

same by which the Septuagint render the word here: the Targum of Jonathan is,

"with horehound and endive they shall eat it;"

and so the Targum on [So 2:9](#). Wild endive; of which Pliny says {q}, there is a wild endive, which in Egypt they call cichory, and bids fair to be one of these herbs; according to the Misnah {r} and Maimonides {s}, there were five sorts of them, and anyone, or all of them, might be eaten; their names with both are these, Chazoreth, Ulshin, Thamcah, Charcabinah, and Maror; the four first of which may be the wild lettuce, endive, horehound, or perhaps "tansie"; and cichory the last. Maror has its name from bitterness, and is by the Misnic commentators {t} said to be a sort of the most bitter coriander; it seems to be the same with "picris": but whatever they were, for it is uncertain what they were, they were expressive of the bitter afflictions of the children of Israel in Egypt, with which their lives were made bitter; and of those bitter afflictions and persecutions in the world, which they that will live godly in Christ Jesus must expect to endure; as well as they may signify that as a crucified Christ must be looked upon, and lived upon by faith, so with mourning and humiliation for sin, and with true repentance for it as an evil and bitter thing, see [Zec 12:10](#).

{p} Nat. Hist. l. 19. c. 8. & 21. 17. & 32. 22. {q} Ibid. {r} Misn. Pesach. c. 2. sect. 6. {s} Hilchot, Chametz Umetzah, c. 7. sect. 13. {t} Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Pesach. ut supra. (c. 2. sect. 6.)

[Exodus 12:9](#)

Ver. 9. **Eat not of it raw**,.... Not roasted enough; and so Jarchi says, that what is not sufficiently roasted, or is not thoroughly and down roasted, is in the Arabic language called an {u}, the word here used; and so Maimonides {w} says it signifies flesh, on which the fire begins to operate, and is roasted a little, but not enough for eating. And indeed there seems to be no necessity of a prohibition of eating the flesh quite raw: some {x} derive the word from a root which signifies to break, and suppose that this rule forbids the breaking or cutting it in pieces; that as it was to be roasted whole, and not a bone of it to be broken, so it was to be brought to table whole, and the whole to be eaten; but then it could not be eaten without being cut to pieces. Abarbinel {y} takes the word in the usual signification of it, "now", as if the sense was, ye shall not eat of it now, not before the evening of the fourteenth day; but whereas Moses had told them,

[Ex 12:6](#), that the lamb was to be kept up until the fourteenth day, it was needless to tell them that they should not eat it now or immediately; the first sense is best, and this

shows that Christ, the antitype of this lamb, is not to be eaten in a carnal but spiritual manner, of which our Lord treats in [Joh 6:31](#), nor sodden at all with water; the Targum of Jonathan is,

"neither boiled in wine, nor in oil, nor in other liquor, nor boiled in water."

This, with respect to the antitype, shows, that Christ is not to be received in a cold lukewarm manner, and with indifference; and that nothing is to be mixed, added, and joined unto him, but he alone is to be regarded in the business of our acceptance, justification, and salvation:

but roast with fire; for the reasons before given: the manner of roasting it, according to the Jewish canons {z}, was this, they bring a spit made of the wood of pomegranate, and thrust it into its mouth quite through it, and put the thighs and entrails within it; they do not roast the passover lamb on an iron spit, nor on an iron grate. Maimonides {a} is a little more particular and exact in his account; to the question, how do they roast it? he replies,

"they transfix it through the middle of the mouth to its posteriors, with a wooden spit, and they hang it in the midst of a furnace, and the fire below:"

so that it was not turned upon a spit, according to our manner of roasting, but was suspended on a hook, and roasted by the fire underneath, and so was a more exact figure of Christ suspended on the cross, and enduring the fire of divine wrath. And Justin Martyr {b} is still more particular, who was by birth a Samaritan, and was well versed in Jewish affairs; he, even in conversing with Trypho the Jew, who could have contradicted him had he said what was wrong, says, the lamb was roasted in the form of a cross; one spit, he says, went through from the lower parts to the head, and again another across the shoulders, to which the hands (or rather the legs) of the lamb were fastened and hung; and so was a very lively emblem of Christ crucified:

his head, with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof; or with its inwards {c}, these were all to be roasted together, the whole lamb with all that belonged to it, with which the above canon of the Jews agrees.

{u} "cruda fuit caro", Golius, col. 2476. Semicocla, "cruda fuit caro", Castell. Lex. col. 2296. Vid. Hottinger. Smegma Oriental. p. 169, 170. {w} Hilchot Korban Pesach. c. 8. sect. 6. {x} Oleaster apud Rivet in loc. Gusset. Comment. Ebr. p. 487, 488; so some in Aben Ezra. {y} So Marinus Brixianus in Arca Noe. {z} Misn. Pesach. c. 7. sect. 1, 2. {a} Hilchot Korban Pesach. c. 8. sect. 10. {b} Dialog. cum Trypho Jud. p. 259. {c} wbrq lew "et cum interioribus ejus", Pagninus, Tigurine version, so Junius &

Tremellius, Piscator.

Exodus 12:10

Ver. 10. **And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning**,.... It was to be all ate up; a whole Christ is to be received and fed upon by faith; Christ in both his natures, divine and human, united in his person, in all his offices of prophet, priest, and King, and with all the benefits and blessings of his grace, and which come by his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice:

and that which remaineth of it until the morning, ye shall burn with fire: what of the flesh which remaineth not ate, and what of it that could not be eaten, as the bones, which were not broken, and the nerves and sinews, which might not be eaten; and so runs the Jewish canon {d},

"the bones, and the sinews, and what remains, they shall burn on the sixteenth day; and if the sixteenth happens on the sabbath, they shall burn on the seventeenth."

The reason of this law was, that what was left might not be converted to common or superstitious uses, as also that the Israelites might not be burdened with it in their journey, nor the Egyptians have an opportunity of treating it with contempt.

{d} Misn. ut supra, (Persch. c. 7.) sect. 10.

Exodus 12:11

Ver. 11. **And thus shall ye eat it**,.... After the following manner, in the habit and posture described: the Targum of Jonathan adds,

"at this time, and not in ages following;"

for these rites were peculiar to the passover in Egypt, and not to be observed in later times:

with your loins girded; that is, with their garments girt about their loins, for the better convenience in travelling; for in those countries they wore long loose garments, which reached to their feet, and unless girt up, were a great hinderance in walking; and may denote the saints being girt with the girdle of truth, and their readiness and fitness to perform every good work:

your shoes on your feet; which used to be put off at feasts, in order to have their feet washed, which was frequently done at such times, as we learn from many instances in Scripture, which could not be done unless the shoes were off, [Ge 18:4](#), besides, it is highly probable that the Israelites in Egypt did not wear shoes in common, it being a hot country, and they in a state of poverty and bondage; but now being about to depart the land, and to take a journey, they are ordered to have their shoes on, to be ready for it: and was a token of their deliverance and freedom, and joy on that occasion; and may, in an evangelic sense, denote the feet of the saints being shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, [Eph 6:15](#),

and your staff in your hand; such as travellers make use of to support and assist, protect and defend them, in their journey, and may be expressive of faith in the word and promises of God, which are the support of his people in their passage through this world, [Ps 23:4](#)

and ye shall eat it in haste; because upon slaying the firstborn the Egyptians would be urgent upon them to depart immediately. Aquila renders it, "with fear", and so the Targum of Jonathan; but the other sense suits best with the circumstances of the Israelites:

it [is] the Lord's passover; which he has commanded, and is a sign and token of his passing over the houses of the Israelites, when he destroyed the firstborn in all the houses of the Egyptians, and which is explained in the following verse, and the reason of its name given; the act of passing was his, the ordinance was appointed by him, and it was typical of the Lord Jesus Christ, the true passover, [1Co 5:7](#).

[Exodus 12:12](#)

Ver. 12. **For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night**,..... Which must be understood consistent with his omnipresence, and of the manifestation of his powerful presence, or of the exertion of his mighty power in the following event: and will smite all the

firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; as had been declared to Pharaoh, Ex 11:5 and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment; meaning either figuratively, the nobles, princes, judges and civil magistrates, who are sometimes called Elohim, gods; but since the firstborn of these, as of others, and so the judgment on them, are comprehended in the preceding clause, this is, rather to be understood literally of the idols of the Egyptians, their images of gold and silver, or of whatever

they were made of: the Targum of Jonathan is, "on all the idols of the Egyptians I will exercise four judgments; the molten idols shall be melted, the idols of stone shall be cut asunder, the idols of earth shall be broke to pieces, and the idols of wood shall become ashes;" see Nu 33:4 and there are some traces of this in Heathen writers; Artapanus {e} says, that by an earthquake most of the temples in Egypt fell; and Justin {f} reports, that Moses, being the leader of the exile Israelites, stole away the sacred things of the Egyptians, i.e. their gods, which they endeavoured to regain by force of arms: I am the Lord; God Almighty, faithful and true, and therefore what was threatened should certainly be performed, and thereby the Egyptians and all others might know that he was Jehovah alone, and that there is no God beside him. {e} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 436. {f} E Trogo, l. 36. c. 2. Exodus 12:13 Ver. 13. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are,.... The blood of the passover lamb being sprinkled on the two sideposts and upper doorposts of the houses inhabited by the Israelites, or where they were eating the passover; this should be a sign or token to them of the Lord's making good his promises, to them, and so of their safety, and to the destroying angel not to enter therein, but pass by and save them: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you; for which reason this ordinance now instituted was called the passover, because the Lord, on sight of the blood sprinkled, passed over the houses of the Israelites to those of the Egyptians; or "leaped", as Jarchi says, the word signifies, skipped from one Egyptian house to another, passing by that of the Israelites: and the plague shall not be upon you, to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt, the pestilence with which the firstborn should be destroyed. Exodus 12:14 Ver. 14. And this shall be unto you for a memorial,.... To be remembered, and that very deservedly, for the destruction of the firstborn of the Egyptians, and for the deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and as memorable a day it is, and much more so, for the redemption of the spiritual Israel by the Messiah; for it was on this selfsame day that he suffered for the redemption and salvation of his people: the Jews not only having a saying, "that in the month Nisan they were redeemed, and in the month Nisan they will be redeemed {g}" but they expressly say, "on the same day, the fifteenth of Nisan, Israel is to be redeemed, in the days of the Messiah, as they were redeemed on that day, as it is said, according to the days, &c. Mic 7:15 {h}:" and you shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; as the fifteenth day was properly the Chagigah; or festival day, when they made a feast both of the flock and of the herd, of both sheep and oxen, De 16:2 you shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever; unto the end of the Jewish economy and church state, until the Messiah come, the true passover, and be sacrificed for us. {g} Roshhashanah, fol. 11. 1. 2. {h} Cabalists apud Fagium in loc. Exodus 12:15 Ver. 15. Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread,.... From the evening of the fourteenth day to the evening of the twenty first; and this was a distinct festival from what was properly called the feast of the passover, and does not respect the first passover in Egypt; for though the passover lamb was eaten with unleavened

bread, and the Israelites ate no other, not only for seven days, but for thirty days following; yet this was not only by the divine command, but through necessity, they having no other bread to eat; but in later times they were commanded to keep a feast for seven days, in which they were not to eat leavened bread, in commemoration of their hasty departure out of Egypt, not having time to leaven the dough in their troughs, and of their distress and want of savoury bread: even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses; out of their dwelling houses, which were to be diligently searched for that purpose, and every hole and crevice in them; and not only their lower rooms, their dining rooms and parlours, but their upper rooms and bedchambers; because it was possible a man might sometimes go into them with a piece of bread in his hand, and drop or leave some of it behind him: yea, synagogues and schools were to be searched, since children might carry thither leavened breads {i}: and this search was to be made by the light of a lamp or candle, not by the light of the moon, if in the night; nor by the light of the sun, if in the day, but by the light of a lamp or candle, and not by the light of a torch, or of a lump of fat, or grease, or oil, but by a lamp or candle of wax {k}: and this search was to be made at the beginning of the night of the fourteenth of Nisan; yea, it is said that leavened bread was forbidden from the seventh hour of the day, that is, one o'clock in the afternoon and upwards, which is the middle of the day {l}: the account of the Misnic doctors is {m}, "R. Meir says, that they may eat leaven the whole fifth hour, i.e. eleven o'clock in the morning, and burn it the beginning of the sixth, or twelve o'clock; R. Judah says, they may eat it all the fourth hour, or tenth o'clock, and suspend it the whole fifth hour, and burn it the beginning of the sixth:" for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day; from the first of the seven days to the last of them, beginning at the night at the fourteenth, and ending at the night of the twenty first: that soul shall be cut off from Israel; either from the commonwealth of Israel, and be disfranchised, and not accounted as an Israelite; or from the Israelitish church state, and have no communion in it, or partake of the ordinances at it; or if it is to be understood of cutting off by death, it is either by the hand of the civil magistrate, or by the immediate hand of God; and is sometimes by the Jews interpreted of a man dying either without children, or before he is fifty years of age, and some even understand it of destruction of soul and body, or of eternal damnation. {i} Lebush, par. 1. No. 433. sect. 1. 3. 10. Schulcan Aruch, par. 1. No. 433. sect. 3. 10. {k} Lebush & Schulcan ib. sect. 1. {l} Lebush & Schulcan No. 431. sect. 1. {m} Misn. Pesach c. 1. sect. 4. Exodus 12:16 Ver. 16. And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation,.... An holy day, in which the people be called to holy exercises, and wholly abstain from worldly business, done on other days: and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation unto you; observed in a festival way, and in the like religious manner the first day was, the day of their going out of Egypt; and the seventh was the day in which Pharaoh and his host were drowned in the Red sea, as Aben Ezra observes; for which reason those days are distinguished from the rest, and appointed to be holy

convocations, and which appear from the journeying of the children of Israel, as computed by Junius: they came to Succoth on the fifteenth, to Etham the seventeenth, to Pihahiroth the eighteenth, where they were ordered to stay, and wait the coming of their enemies, on the twentieth the army of Pharaoh came up to them, and the night following the Israelites passed through the sea and the Egyptians were drowned: no manner of work shall be done in them; as used to be done on other days, and as were on the other five days of this festival: the Jewish canons are, "it is forbidden to do any work on the evening of the passover, from the middle of the day and onward, and whoever does work from the middle of the day and onward, they excommunicate him; even though, he does it for nothing, it is forbidden {n}: R. Meir says, whatever work anyone begins before the fourteenth (of Nisan) he may finish it on the fourteenth, but he may not begin it on the beginning of the fourteenth, though he could finish it: the wise men say, three workmen may work on the evening of the passover unto the middle of the day, and they are these, tailors, barbers, and fullers: R. Jose bar Judah says, also shoemakers {o},"but in the text no exception is made but the following: save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you; so that kindling fire and preparing food might be done on those days, which might not be done on sabbath days; and the prohibition of work was not so strict on those days as on that. {n} Lebush, par. 1. No. 468. sect. 1. Schulcan Aruch, par. 1. No. 468. sect. 1. {o} Misn. Pesach. c. 4. sect. 6. Exodus 12:17 Ver. 17. And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread,.... Which was a distinct feast from the passover feast; for though at that unleavened bread was eaten, it was kept but one night, this seven days; and it is repeated that it might be taken notice of, and the rather, as it was to be observed in all ages as long as the Jewish economy lasted; the reason of which follows: for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt; which, though not already done, was just on doing, and was certain; and besides, it respects the day when it should come about another year: by their "armies" are meant the tribes of Israel, not so much for their military force, for as yet they were an unarmed people, but for their numbers, which were sufficient to make several considerable armies, and for their order and ease, and their being without any fear of the enemy, in which they marched out of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever; according to the rules given, with the same exactness, strictness, and constancy, as the first of the passover, and as long as that continued; See Gill on "Ex 12:14". Exodus 12:18 Ver. 18. In the first month,.... As it was now ordered to be reckoned, the month Abib or Nisan: the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread; that is, at the evening following, the fourteenth of Nisan, and which was the beginning of the fifteenth day, the Jews beginning their day from the evening: hence the Targum of Jonathan is, "on the fourteenth of Nisan ye shall slay the passover, in the evening of the fifteenth ye shall eat unleavened bread:" unto the twentieth day of the month at even; which would make just seven days; the above Targum adds, "on the evening of the twenty second ye shall eat leavened bread," which

was the evening following the twenty first day. This long abstinence from leaven denotes, that the whole lives of those who are Israelites indeed should be without guile, hypocrisy, and malice, and should be spent in sincerity and truth. Exodus 12:19 Ver. 19. Seven days there shall be no leaven found in your houses,.....

Wherefore, on the fourteenth day the most diligent search was made, and whatever was found was burnt, or cast into the sea, or dispersed with the wind; about which the traditionary writers of the Jews, give many rules and canons, See Gill on "Ex 12:15", for whoso eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel; which is repeated to deter them from the breach of this ordinance; See Gill on "Ex 12:15", and it is added for further explanation, of whom it concerns: whether he be a stranger, or born in the land; by a "stranger" is meant, not a mere Heathen, who was not bound by this law, but a proselyte; and not a proselyte of the gate, one that was only a sojourner among them, and observed the commandments of the sons of Noah; but a proselyte of righteousness, who professed the Jewish religion, and proposed to conform to it in all respects, and therefore was obliged to observe this as other precepts: and by one "born in the land", is intended a native of the land of Canaan, whither they were now going in order to possess it, or a real Israelite, such as were born of Israelitish parents, and proper inhabitants of Canaan, which they would be put into the possession of. Exodus 12:20 Ver. 20. Ye shall eat nothing leavened,.... Bread or anything else that had any leaven in it: in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread, that is, if they eat any bread at all, it must be such; otherwise they might eat cakes of almonds or of eggs mixed with sugar, provided there was no leaven used, and this the Jews call the rich unleavened bread {p}: this is repeated over and over, that they might be the more careful of observing this precept; but as this was limited for a certain time, it plainly appears to be a mistake of Tacitus {q} the Roman historian, who represents unleavened bread as the bread the Jews eat of in common. {p} See Leo Modena's History of the Rites, &c. of the Jews, par. 3. c. 3. sect. 5. {q} Hist. l. 5. c. 4. Exodus 12:21 Ver. 21. Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel,.... Not in age but in office, who were either heads of families, or at least principal men in the tribes; which explains in what manner he was to speak to the congregation of Israel, and convey to them the will of God concerning the observation of these feasts, Ex 12:3, and said unto them, draw out; a lamb or a kid, out of the flocks on the tenth day of the month, and keep it up until the fourteenth, as in Ex 12:3 and take you a lamb, according to your families; or "take ye of the flock" {r}, whether a lamb or a kid; a lamb for every family, if there was a sufficient number in it to eat it up; if not, two or more families were to join and keep the feast together: and kill the passover; the lamb for the passover, which was to be done on the fourteenth day of the month; and before the priesthood was established in the family of Aaron, and before the Israelites were possessed of the land of Canaan, and the temple was built at Jerusalem, the passover was killed by the heads of families, and in their own houses, but afterwards it was killed only by the priests, and at Jerusalem and

in the temple there, see De 16:5. {r} zau "de filiis gregis", Onk. & Jon. Exodus 12:22 Ver. 22. And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop,.... Which some take to be "mint", others "origanum" or "marjoram", as Kimchi {s}, others "rosemary", as Piscator, Rivet, and many more; and indeed this seems to be fitter to strike or sprinkle with than hyssop; but it is more generally understood of hyssop, because the Hebrew word "ezob" is so near in sound to it; though whether it means the same herb we call hyssop is uncertain: Jarchi says, three stalks of it are called a bunch, and so the Misnic canon runs {t}, "the command concerning hyssop is three stalks (which Maimonides on the place interprets roots), and in them three branches;" which some have allegorically applied to the Trinity, by whom the hearts of God's people are sprinkled with the blood of the true paschal Lamb, and are purged from dead works: the Heathens in their sacrifices used sometimes branches of laurel, and sometimes branches of the olive, to sprinkle with {u}: and dip it in the blood that is in the basin: which, according to the Targum of Jonathan, was an earthen vessel, into which the blood of the lamb was received when slain, and into this the bunch of hyssop was dipped; so it was usual with the Heathens to receive the blood of the sacrifice in cups or basins {x}: the blood being received into a basin, and not spilled on the ground and trampled on, may denote the preciousness of the blood of Christ, the true passover lamb, which is for its worth and excellent efficacy to be highly prized and esteemed, and not to be counted as a common or unholy thing; and the dipping the bunch of hyssop into the blood of the lamb may signify the exercise of faith on the blood of Christ, which is a low and humble grace, excludes boasting in the creature, deals alone with the blood of Jesus for peace, pardon, and cleansing, and by which the heart is purified, as it deals with that blood: and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that [is] in the basin: an emblem of the sprinkling of the hearts and consciences of believers with the blood of Christ, and cleansing them from all sin by it: and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning; that they might not be in the way of the destroyer; and though the destroying angel knew an Israelite from an Egyptian, yet this was to be the ordinance of protection to them, abiding in their houses, marked with the blood of the passover lamb; signifying that their safety was in their being under that blood, as the safety of believers lies in their being justified by the blood of Christ; for to that it is owing that they are saved from wrath to come: this is the purple covering under which they pass safely through this world to the heavenly glory, Ro 5:9, this circumstance was peculiar to the passover in Egypt; in later times there was not the like danger. {s} Sepher Shorash, rad. bza. {t} Misn. Parah, c. 11. sect. 9. {u} Vid. Kipping. Rom. Antiqu. p. 241. Virgil Aeneid. 6. Ovid. Fast. l. 5. {x} "----- tepidumque cruorem Succipiunt pateris-----" Virgil. Aeneid. 6. Exodus 12:23 Ver. 23. For the Lord will pass though to smite the Egyptians,.... All the firstborn in the several families, in all the towns and cities in Egypt: and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and upon the two side posts; which must be understood of his taking notice of it with a special view to the good of those within the house; otherwise every thing

is seen by his all seeing eye: and thus Christ, the Lamb of God, is in the midst of the throne, as though he had been slain, and is always in the view of God and his divine justice; and his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, are always looked unto by him with pleasure, delight, and satisfaction, to the advantage of his people, as applied unto them, who are hereby accepted with him, justified in his sight, and secure from condemnation and wrath:the Lord will pass over the door; and the house where this blood is sprinkled, and go to the next, or where Egyptians dwell; and thus justice passes over, and passes by, acquits and discharges them who are interested in the blood and sacrifice of Christ:and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you; the destroying angel, as the Targum of Jonathan; for he seems to be distinct from the Lord, who is said to pass through and pass over, being an attendant and minister of his, to execute vengeance upon the Egyptians; and whether a good or a bad angel, it matters not, since God can make use of either to inflict judgments on men; but it may be more probably the former, even such an one as was employed in destroying the whole host of the Assyrians in one night, 2Ki 19:35 and answers better in the antitype or emblem to the justice of God taking vengeance on ungodly sinners, when it is not suffered to do the saints any harm. Exodus 12:24Ver. 24. And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and thy sons for ever. Not this last thing of sprinkling the blood, which was peculiar to the passover in Egypt; but the whole before observed relating to the feast of the passover, and the feast of unleavened bread, and all the rites appertaining to them, which were to be observed until the coming of Christ. Exodus 12:25Ver. 25. And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land,.... To the land of Canaan, towards which they were just about to set forward on their journey, and in a few years would be in the possession of:which the Lord will give you according as he hath promised; to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to them:that ye shall keep this service; enjoined them, respecting the passover lamb, and leavened bread, with all the rites and ceremonies relative thereunto, excepting such as were peculiar to the first passover in Egypt. Exodus 12:26Ver. 26. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, what mean ye by this service?] Of killing and roasting a lamb, and eating it with bitter herbs, and of abstaining from leavened bread. Exodus 12:27Ver. 27. That ye shall say, it is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover,.... This lamb is a sacrifice, both eucharistical, or by way of thanksgiving for their safety, when the firstborn of the Egyptians were slain, and for their deliverance out of Egypt; and also propitiatory, the blood of this lamb being a propitiation or atonement for all within the house where it was sprinkled, as before observed from Aben Ezra; and typical of the atoning sacrifice of Christ our passover, 1Co 5:7 and this was commanded by the Lord, and approved of and accepted by him, and therefore called his sacrifice as well as passover, for the following reason:who passed over the houses of the children of Israel, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses; their families, not suffering the destroying angel to enter into them, which was a very distinguishing mercy, and worthy of

remembrance. Now in this they were to instruct their children in successive generations, that the memory of it might be kept up, and a sense of the goodness of God continued, and his name glorified. Maimonides {y} says, "it is a command to make this known to children, even though they do not ask it, as it is said, "and thou shall show thy son", Ex 13:8. According to the son's knowledge, his father teaches him; how if he is a little one or foolish? he says to him, my son, all of us were servants, as this handmaid, or this servant, in Egypt; and on this night the holy blessed God redeemed us, and brought us into liberty: and if the son is grown up, and a wise man, he makes known to him what happened to us in Egypt, and the wonders which were done for us by the hand of Moses our master, all according to the capacity of his son; and it is necessary to make a repetition on this night, that the children may see, and ask, and say, how different is this night from all other nights! until he replies and says to them, so and so it happened, and thus and thus it was:"and the people bowed the head and worshipped; signifying the deep sense they had of the mercy shown them, their thankfulness for it, and their readiness to observe the ordinance now instituted. {y} Hilchot Chametz Umetzah, c. 7. sect. 2, 3. Exodus 12:28Ver. 28. And the children of Israel went away,.... The elders of the people, Ex 12:21 they departed to their several tribes and families at Goshen and elsewhere:and did as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they; they took a lamb on the tenth day, and kept it till the fourteenth, on which day they slew it, and roasted it with fire, and ate it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Exodus 12:29Ver. 29. And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt,.... The midnight of the fifteenth of Nisan, as the Targum of Jonathan, when fast asleep, and thoughtless of any danger; and it being at such a time must strike with a greater horror and terror, when sensible of the blow, which might be attended with a great noise, that might awaken the rest:from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne; the heir to his crown, who was to have sat upon his throne, or already did, being taken a partner with him in it:unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; or prison, that was grinding at the mill there, Ex 11:5 which was the work and business the prisoners were often put to, as appears from the case of Samson, Jud 16:21, and all the firstborn of cattle; which were left of the other plagues, which had consumed great numbers of them. Exodus 12:30Ver. 30. And Pharaoh rose up in the night,.... Being awakened by the uncommon noise he heard:he and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; he and his nobles, and ministers of state, courtiers, and counsellors, and his subjects in common, perhaps everywhere in his kingdom, but particularly in the metropolis:and there was a great cry in Egypt; throughout the whole land, the firstborn being everywhere slain, which caused a most dreadful lamentation of parents for their eldest son, of brethren and sisters for their elder brother, and of servants and maidens for the principal and heir of the family; a cry so loud and general as perhaps was never heard before or since, and under which distress they could have no relief, or any to be their comforter, since all were in the same circumstances: for there was not a house wherein there was

not one dead; for if there was no firstborn in it, as it can hardly be thought there should be in every house, though some have been of opinion that it was so ordered in Providence that there should; yet the principal or most considerable person in the family, that is next to the master, might be called the firstborn, as Jarchi notes from Ps 89:27. Though this may be taken as an hyperbolic expression, or, as Aben Ezra observes, it being usual with the Scripture to say that of all, which is true of the greatest part. Exodus 12:31 Ver. 31. And he called for Moses and Aaron by night,.... Not that Pharaoh went in person, but he sent his servants to call them; for they never saw his face more after he had drove them from his presence; but now was fulfilled what Moses told him, that his servants should come to him in a very suppliant manner, and entreat him and his people to get away in all haste, Ex 10:28. Where Moses and Aaron now were is not certain, probably in the city, or suburbs of it, where Pharaoh's palace was, for it is not likely that they were gone to Goshen:and said, rise up; from their beds in which they now were, being midnight:and get ye forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; even all of them, without any exception of women or children as before; and without limiting them to place or time, where they should go, and how long they should stay, and without obliging them to promise to return:and go, serve the Lord, as ye have said; as they had entreated they might, and as they had demanded in the name of the Lord that they should; to which now he gave his consent, though he afterwards repented of it. Exodus 12:32 Ver. 32. Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said,.... Which they had insisted upon should go with them, but he had refused, but now he is willing they should go with them:and be gone; out of his city and country in all haste:and bless me also; or pray for me, as the Targum of Onkelos; pray the Lord to bestow a blessing upon me also, as I have done well by you in suffering you to depart with your whole families, flocks, and herds. The Targum of Jonathan is, "I desire nothing else of you, only pray for me, that I die not;"and so Jarchi. As he found his firstborn, and the heir to his crown and kingdom, was dead, he might justly fear it would be his case next, and perhaps very soon; and therefore desires their prayers for him, that his life might be spared. Exodus 12:33 Ver. 33. And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people,.... The people of Israel; not using force, but strong entreaties, the most powerful arguments, and importunate language they were masters of:that they might send them out of the land in haste: this looks as if it was the people about Pharaoh, his ministers and courtiers, they were pressing upon to dismiss the Israelites at once, and to hasten their departure; or else Moses and Aaron, and the elders of the people, to stir them up to a quick dispatch of their affairs, that they might be soon rid of them; unless the sense is, that they were very solicitous and earnest with the people, that they would get away out of the land as fast as they could:for they said, we [be] all dead [men]; for their firstborn being all slain, they expected that they themselves, and the rest of their families, would be struck with death next; and this they feared would be the case in a very little time, if they did not depart;for they had sufficient reason to convince them,

that it was purely on their account, and because they had not leave to go out of the land, that all the above judgments, and particularly the last, were inflicted on them. Exodus 12:34 Ver. 34. And the people took their dough before it was leavened,.... They had that evening mixed their flour with water, and made it into dough, but had put no leaven into it; and the Egyptians being so very earnest to have them gone, they stayed not to put any leaven into it:[but] their kneadingtroughs, or rather "their dough", being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders; for it is not likely that their troughs should be wrapped up in the skirts of their garments; but their dough might, if their clothes were like the hykes of the Arabs now, as Dr. Shaw {z} thinks they were, and which are pretty much like the plaids of the Scotch, and which are large enough for such a purpose; as even the veil which Ruth wore held six measures of barley, Ru 3:15 and so these clothes of theirs, like the Arabs' hykes, and the Scotch plaids, might be so made, that large lumps of dough being bound up in them might be thrown over their shoulders, and so carried by them when they journeyed. {z} Travels, p. 224, 225. Edit. 2. Exodus 12:35 Ver. 35. And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses,.... Ex 3:22 and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment; or "they asked" {a} them of the Egyptians to give them them, which they readily did to get rid of them; for upon their being urgent with the Israelites to be gone in haste, they might reply, that they were not provided with things suitable for a journey, and therefore requested such things of them, which they at once freely consented to; See Gill on "Ex 3:22", See Gill on "Ex 11:2", See Gill on "Ex 11:3". {a} wlawyw "et postulaverunt", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; "petierunt", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. Exodus 12:36 Ver. 36. And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians,.... Their minds were disposed towards them, and their hearts were inclined to grant their request, and did grant it:so they lent unto them: such things as they required; or "they gave unto them" {b}; made presents of them freely to them; and so Josephus says {c}, that they honoured them with gifts:and they spoiled the Egyptians; stripped them of their substance and riches, of their most valuable things; in doing which they were in no wise criminal, since they did it by the direction and authority of God, who has a right to dispose of all the things in the world; and to take of them from one, and give to another, as he pleases; nor was any injustice done to the Egyptians, who owed all this, and perhaps abundantly more, to the Israelites, for the labour and service they had served them in for many years; besides, they were the avowed enemies of Israel, and the Lord had now put himself at the head of the armies of Israel, and was contending with them, and they with him, who should overcome; and this was doing no other than what, acceding to the law of nations, is lawful to be done in time of war; to spoil, plunder, and distress an enemy, in whatsoever way it can be done. And thus the promise made to Abraham, that his posterity should come out with great substance, was fulfilled, Ge 15:14. This circumstance is taken notice of by some Heathen writers, as Artapanus {d}; who says they borrowed many cups of the Egyptians, and not a little raiment, besides a great

quantity of other treasure and riches; and so Ezekiel the tragedian {e} speaks of a vast deal of gold and silver, raiment, and other things, the Israelitish women had of the Egyptians at their departure, and who relates the history of Moses and the above plagues very agreeably to the sacred writings. {b} Mwlavyw "ut petita darent", Tigurine version, "ut dederint", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Ainsworth, Cartwright. {c} Antiqu. l. 2. c. 14. sect. 6. {d} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 436. {e} Apud Euseb. ib. c. 29. p. 443. Exodus 12:37 Ver. 37. And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth,.... Rameses was a place in Goshen, or rather the land of Goshen, from whence the country was so called; See Gill on "Ge 47:11". The Targum of Jonathan takes it to be Pelusium, or Sin, now called Tinah, formerly the strength of Egypt, and which lay at the entrance of it, and says it was one hundred and thirty miles to Succoth; and Jarchi says one hundred and twenty. But the distance between these two places was not so great; for Succoth from Rameses it is computed was eight miles {f} only. The latter place is so called by anticipation; for it was now a desert, as Josephus {g} says, which he calls Latopolis, but had its name Succoth from the children of Israel pitching their tents there; for the word signifies tents or tabernacles. The number of the children of Israel when they came out of Egypt were about six hundred thousand on foot, that were men, besides children; and which is confirmed by the account that Chaeremon {h} the Heathen gives, who makes the number of those drove out of Egypt, as he calls them, 250,000; and says that when they came to Pelusium, they found there 380,000 left there by Amenophis; which makes in all 630,000. And so Philo the Jew says {i}, they were above 600,000, besides old men, children, and women, that could not easily be numbered; and the word "about" will admit of it, since it may be used not to diminish, but to increase the number; and it is certain that in the second year after they were come out of Egypt, their number was 600,550 without the Levites, who were not numbered; and they that were numbered were such as were twenty years old and upward, and able to go forth to war, Nu 1:9 and such were those here, as Jarchi observes; so that if there were 600,000 men of twenty years old and upwards, able to bear arms, besides women, children, and old men, it may well be thought that in all there were no less than near two millions and a half; for, according to the ordinary proportion allowed in other nations of four to one between the number of the whole people in a nation, and those men fit to bear arms, that the number of the Israelites alone, of all ages and sexes which went out of Egypt along with Moses, will amount to 2,400,000 souls {j}; which was a prodigious increase of seventy persons in little more than two hundred years, and a most marvellous thing it was, that in so large a number of persons there was not one feeble among them, Ps 105:37. {f} See Bunting's Travels, p. 81. {g} Ut supra, (antiqu. l. 2.) c. 15. sect. 1. {h} Apud Joseph. contr. Apion, l. 1. sect. 32. {i} De Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 625. {j} Bp. of Clogher's Chronology of the Hebrew Bible, p. 271. See Judah Leon's Relation of Memorable Things, &c. p. 2. Exodus 12:38 Ver. 38. And a mixed multitude went up also with them,.... Some of these were Egyptians, and some

of other nations that had resided in Egypt, and who, on various accounts, might choose to go along with the children of Israel; some through intermarriages with them, being loath to part with their relations, see Le 20:10, others on account of religion, being proselytes of righteousness, and others through worldly interest, the land of Egypt being by the plagues a most desolate place; and such wonders being wrought for the children of Israel, they saw they were a people that were the favourites of heaven, and judged it safest and best and most for their interest to keep with them; the Targum of Jonathan computes the number of those to be two hundred and forty myriads:and flocks and herds, [even] very much cattle; the greatest part of which must be supposed to belong to the children of Israel, whose cattle were not destroyed when those of the Egyptians were; and the rest might be the cattle of such who feared and regarded the word of God, and took their cattle into their houses at the time of the plague of hail, whereby they were preserved; and which might be an inducement to them to take their herds and their flocks, and go along with the children of Israel, see Ex 9:20. Exodus 12:39Ver. 39. And they baked unleavened cakes,.... While they were at Succoth; but since that was a desert place, where could they get ovens to bake them in? they might lay them upon coals, and by frequent turning them bake them, or under hot ashes, under a pan covered with hot embers and coals, on an hearth, in which way cakes and other things are now baked with us in many places: of the quick way of dressing cakes in the eastern countries, See Gill on "Ge 18:6" and some render the word, "cakes under ashes" {k} which were made of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt; for it was not leavened; of the manner of their bringing it, See Gill on "Ex 12:34", and the reason why it was not leavened follows: because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry: to leaven their dough, in such haste did they go out from thence. When they are said to be "thrust out", it is not to be understood of force and compulsion used, or of any indecent and ill behaviour towards them; but of earnest entreaties and urgent persuasions to depart; though this no doubt gave rise to the stories told by Justin {l}, Tacitus {m}, and others, that they were drove and cast out of Egypt by force, because they were a filthy diseased people, infected with the scab, itch, and leprosy; whereas there was not a sick, unsound, infirm, and feeble person among them, as before observed: neither had they prepared for themselves any victual; they had their flocks and their herds, out of which they could take for their use, and they had dough, though unleavened and unbaked; but they had nothing ready dressed; what remained of the passover lamb they were obliged to burn; they had nothing which was got by hunting or fishing, as the word {n} used signifies; neither venison nor fish, of the latter of which there was great plenty in Egypt. {k} tge "subcineritios panes", V. L. "subcineritia", Samar, egkrufiav, Sept. so Munster. {l} E Trogo, l. 36. c. 2. {m} Hist. l. 5. c. 3. Manetho apud Joseph. contr. Apion, l. 1. c. 15. & Chaeremon apud ib. c. 32. & Lysimachus apud ib. c. 34. {n} tdu "vox autem proprie significat aliquid venando captum", Piscator. Exodus 12:40Ver. 40. Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt,.... The Septuagint version

adds, "and in the land of Canaan"; and the Samaritan version is, "the sojourning of the children of Israel, and of their fathers, in the land of Canaan, and in the land of Egypt." Agreeably to which are both the Talmuds: in one {o} of them the words are, "in Egypt and in all lands," and in the other {p}, "in Egypt, and in the rest of the lands;" and in the same way Aben Ezra interprets the words. And certain it is, that Israel did not dwell in Egypt four hundred and thirty years, and even not much more than two hundred years; but then they and their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, dwelt so long in Mesopotamia, in Canaan, and in Egypt, in foreign countries, in a land not theirs, as the phrase is, Ge 15:13 where the place of their sojourning, and the time of it, are given by way of prophecy. The Jews reckon from the vision of God to Abraham between the pieces to the birth of Isaac thirty years, so the Targum of Jonathan; but that cannot be, though from his coming out of his own native place, Ur of the Chaldeans, to the birth of Isaac, might be so many years, since he was seventy five years of age when he came out of Haran, Ge 12:4 and if he stayed at Haran five years, as probably he did, then there were just thirty from his coming out of Ur of the Chaldees to Isaac's birth, since he was born when he was one hundred years old; and from the birth of Isaac to the birth of Jacob was sixty years, Ge 25:26 and from thence to his going down to Egypt was one hundred and thirty, Ge 47:9 and from thence to the coming of Israel out of Egypt were two hundred and ten years, as is generally computed, which make the exact sum of four hundred and thirty years; of these See Gill on "Ac 7:6", See Gill on "Ga 3:17". {o} T. Hieros. Magillah, fol. 71. 4. {p} T. Bab. Megillah, fol. 9. 1. Exodus 12:41 Ver. 41. And it came to pass at the end of four hundred and thirty years,.... As soon as completed: even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt; which was the fifteenth of Nisan; and Jarchi says it was on the fifteenth of Nisan that the decree was made known to Abraham between the pieces, concerning the affliction of his posterity four hundred years in a land not theirs; but this is not to be depended on; yet it looks as if at the close of the four hundred and thirty years, from the date of them, exactly to a day, the children of Israel, the armies of the Lord, came out of Egypt in great order: however, it seems certain by this that they all came out the same day, which was very wonderful that such a large number should be collected together, and that they should march out of the land on one and the same day; and it is pretty plain it was in the daytime, and very likely in the midst of the day; for they were not to stir out of their houses till morning, and then they had what remained of the passover to burn, as well as many other things to do, it is very probable, and some which they could not do; so that they did not go by night, or by stealth, but openly at noon day; and the words will bear to be rendered, "in the strength or body of the day" {r}, when it is at its height, as it is at noon; and so the Jews represent the Lord speaking after this manner {s}, "If I bring out Israel by night, the Egyptians will say, now he does his work after the manner of thieves; but behold, I will bring them out in the midst of the day, in the strength of the sun, as is said, "and it was in the selfsame day", &c." {r} hzh Mzyh

Mueb "in corpore diei hujus", Pagninus, Montanus; "in the body" or "strength of that day", Ainsworth. {s} Pirke Eliezer, c. 48. fol. 58. 2. Exodus 12:42 Ver. 42. It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord,.... Or "a night of observations" {t}, in which many things are to be observed to the honour and glory of God, as done by him, wherein his power, wisdom, goodness, truth and faithfulness, are displayed; partly by the destruction of the Egyptian firstborn, and particularly for bringing them, the children of Israel, out from the land of Egypt: with the leave, and even pressing importunity of the Egyptians, and with so much wealth and riches, having found great favour in their sight, which was from the Lord: this is that night of the Lord to be much observed of all the children of Israel in their generations in successive ages unto the coming of the Messiah, for the reasons before given; and the selfsame night is worthy the remembrance of all the spiritual Israel of God, of all true believers in Christ; for that very night after Christ had ate the passover with his disciples, he was betrayed by one of them; and to perpetuate the memory of this, and of his sufferings and death, an ordinance is appointed to be observed until his second coming, see 1Co 11:23, and the ancient Jews themselves have had some notion of the appearance of the Messiah at this time; for they not only expect his coming at the time of the passover, and speak of their redemption by him in the month of Nisan, as before observed on Ex 12:14, but of this very night, among the four observable things in it, the fourth they say is, Moses shall go out of the midst of the wilderness, and the King Messiah out of Rome; so it is said in the Jerusalem Targum on the place. {t} Myrmv lyl "nox observantiarum", Munster, Fagius, Vatablus, so Drusius, Piscator, Cartwright, Ainsworth. Exodus 12:43 Ver. 43. And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron,.... At the same time he acquainted them with the above things: this is the ordinance of the passover; as before delivered, and these the laws and rules, according to which it is to be observed, as now related, both with respect to the lamb, and to the unleavened bread; and the following is an account of the persons that were to partake of it: there shall no stranger eat thereof, one that is of another country, an entire Heathen, and unacquainted with, and does not profess the Jewish religion, which was the religion of God. Exodus 12:44 Ver. 44. But every man's servant that is bought for money,.... And so his own property: when thou hast circumcised him; as such an one ought to be, according to the covenant of circumcision given to Abraham, Ge 17:13, though one should think not without his consent; wherefore care was to be taken to purchase such servants as would be willing to conform to that rite, and pains were to be taken with them to instruct them in it, and persuade them to it; to which, when they had submitted, they had a right to eat the passover, but if they did not, it was not allowed: then shall he eat thereof; but not otherwise. Exodus 12:45 Ver. 45. A foreigner and an hired servant shall not eat thereof. One of another nation, and one that was only hired by the day, week, or year; as they were not obliged to circumcision, so without it they had no right to eat of the passover, none but such as became proselytes of righteousness. Exodus 12:46 Ver. 46. In one house shall it be eaten,.... For though there might be

more lambs than one eaten in a house, where there were a sufficient number to eat them; and there might be more societies than one in a house, provided they kept themselves distinct, and were large enough each of them to eat up a lamb; yet one lamb might not be eaten in different houses, a part of it in one house, and a part of it in another; which may denote the unity of the general assembly and church of the firstborn, and the distinct separate congregations of the saints, and the right that each have to a whole Christ, who is not to be divided from his ministers, word, and ordinances; See Gill on "Mt 26:18": thou shall not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house: into another house; for where there was not a sufficient number in one house to eat a lamb, their neighbours in the next house were to join with them; but then they were not to part it, and one portion of it to be eaten in one house, and the other in another, but they were to meet together in one of their houses, and there partake of it; thus, though Christ may be fed upon by faith any where by particular believers, yet in an ordinance way only in the church of God: neither shall ye break a bone thereof; any of its tender bones to get out the marrow; and so the Targum of Jonathan adds, "that ye may eat that which is in the midst of it:" this was remarkably fulfilled in Christ the antitype, Joh 19:32. Exodus 12:47 Ver. 47. All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. The passover, and the feast of unleavened bread only; for a Gentile was first to be circumcised, and be joined to the congregation, and then partake of it, and not before. Exodus 12:48 Ver. 48. And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, &c.] Who by so doing became a proselyte of the gate, he observing the commands of the sons of Noah: and will keep the passover of the Lord; is desirous of being admitted to that ordinance: let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near, and keep it: first himself, and then all his male children and male servants, and then, and not till then, he might approach to this ordinance, and observe it; for by this means he would become a proselyte of righteousness, and in all respects as an Israelite, or son of Abraham, as it follows: and he shall be as one that is born in the land; a native and proper inhabitant of Canaan, enjoying all the privileges and immunities of such: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof; these laws and rules concerning those persons that were to eat of the passover are such as were to be observed in all successive generations, to the coming of Christ; and were the rather necessary to be given now, because of the mixed multitude who now came up with the children of Israel out of Egypt. Exodus 12:49 Ver. 49. One law shall be to him that is homeborn,.... A proper Israelite, one that is so by descent: and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you; that becomes a proselyte to the true religion; these were both bound by the same law, and obliged to observe the same rites and ceremonies, and partook of the same ordinances, benefits, and privileges; this was a dawn of grace to the poor Gentiles, and presignified what would be in Gospel times, when they should be fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, be fellow heirs of the same body, and partakers of the promises of Christ by the Gospel, Eph 2:19. Exodus 12:50 Ver. 50. Thus did all the children of Israel,.... They slew a lamb, and roasted and

ate it, with unleavened bread, and bitter herbs, and took a bunch of hyssop, and dipped it in the blood, and struck the lintel and the side posts of the doors of their houses: this they did on the night of their deliverance out of Egypt: as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they; being instructed by them; which is an instance of their ready and cheerful obedience to the divine will, which they were under great obligation to perform, from a grateful sense of the wonderful mercy and favour they now were made partakers of. Exodus 12:51 Ver. 51. And it came to pass the selfsame day,.... That the above ordinance was instituted and celebrated in the night: that the Lord did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, by their armies; by their several tribes, which were like so many armies, marching in large numbers, and with great order and regularity, See Gill on "Ex 7:4".

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 13:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 13

This chapter begins with an order to sanctify or set apart the firstborn of man and beast to the Lord, [Ex 13:1](#) and the people of Israel are charged to keep the feast of unleavened bread in its season, from year to year, when they came into the land of Canaan, the reason of which they were to acquaint their children with, [Ex 13:3](#) and they are also directed, when come into the land of Canaan, to set apart every firstling of a beast unto the Lord, and particularly the firstling of an ass was to be redeemed with a lamb, or its neck to be broke, and all the firstborn of men were to be redeemed also, [Ex 13:11](#), and when their children inquired the reason of it, they were to be told it was on account of the Lord's slaying the firstborn of men and beast among the Egyptians, when Pharaoh would not let Israel go, and of saving the firstborn of his people, [Ex 13:14](#), and it is observed, that when the children of Israel went out of Egypt, they were not led by the nearest way, the way of the land of the Philistines, but a round about way, the way of the wilderness of the Red sea, when they took the bones of Joseph with them, as he had adjured them to do, [Ex 13:17](#), and the chapter is concluded with an account of their journeying from Succoth to Etham, the Lord going before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night, [Ex 13:20](#).

Ver. 1. **And the Lord spake unto Moses**,.... When he and the Israelites were at Succoth:

saying; as follows.

[Exodus 13:2](#)

Ver. 2. **Sanctify unto me all the firstborn**,.... That is, of males, as the Targum of Jonathan adds, for those, and not females, were only either sacrificed or redeemed, see [Ex 13:12](#), and this sanctification of them to the Lord signifies the separation or devoting of them to the service of God; if the firstborn of clean creatures they were to be sacrificed, if unclean to be redeemed with a price, and so the firstborn of men, because it was not lawful to sacrifice them; and the money for the redemption of them was given to the priests, the ministers of the Lord, and so to him; who these first, born were is further explained:

whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast; that is, if a male; for, if a female, though it openeth the womb, was not reckoned a firstborn, because not to be offered; nor even a male after the birth of a female, because that openeth not the womb; and so if a man married a widow, and she had had children by her former husband, though she should bring him a son, which was his firstborn, yet not being her's, and not opening the womb, was not subject to this law; but if a man married several wives one after another, or together, who had never been married before, or had had no children; if each of them brought him a son at first birth, they were all of them firstborn, and to be sanctified to the Lord; but the Jews say {u}, if a woman at her first birth brought forth a male and a female, the father was free from this law of the redemption of the firstborn, because the female might come forth first: this phrase, "among the children of Israel", shows that this law only belonged to them, and not to the Gentiles; wherefore the Jewish doctors say {w}, if a man buys cattle of an Heathen, and sells to him, or is in partnership with him, and gives and takes of him, he is free from the law of the firstborn; for it is said "among the Israelites", and not among others:

it is mine: all creatures, man and beast, are the Lord's by creation; but these firstborn were his in a peculiar manner, and which he reserved to himself, to his own use and service; and the people of Israel were under great obligation to devote them to him, since he had spared all their firstborn, when all the firstborn of the Egyptians, both man and beast, were destroyed: this may denote the special and peculiar interest the Lord has in the general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, through the special, particular, and eternal choice of them in Christ, and the redemption of them to him by the price of his blood; and who, on account both of their election of God, and redemption by Christ, are laid under obligation to give up themselves to God, a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice, which is but their reasonable service.

{u} Misn. Becerot, c. 8. sect. 4, 5. & Bartenora in ib. {w} Ibid. c. 2. sect. 1.

Exodus 13:3

Ver. 3. **And Moses said unto the people,**.... After the Lord had spoken to him, and said the above things:

remember this day in which ye came out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; or "of servants" {x} where they had been servants to the Egyptians, by whom they had been made to serve with rigour, and their lives made bitter with hard bondage; that country had been like a prison house unto them, where they had been detained captives, and

treated in a very cruel manner; but now they were come out of this place and state of servitude, even that very day, the fifteenth of Nisan; and which therefore it became them to remember, they and theirs, in all succeeding generations, as the Lord had directed, and which is afterwards repeated to impress it the more upon their, minds and memories:

for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out of this place; it was not by their own might and strength that they were redeemed from their state of bondage, but by the mighty hand of the Lord who wrought such signs and wonders before Pharaoh and his servants, and inflicted such plagues upon them, which none but an omnipotent hand could do, which obliged them at last to let them go: and if the Israelites were under obligation, on account of this redemption, to remember the day when it was in this wonderful manner wrought out, much, more reason have we to remember the redemption by Christ the mighty Redeemer, whose own arm wrought salvation for us, and delivered us out of the hands of our spiritual enemies, that were stronger than we, by frequently attending the ordinance of the Lord's supper, which is instituted to bring this amazing affair to our remembrance, and which is to be continued for that purpose unto the second coming of Christ:

there shall no leavened bread be eaten; as they then on this very day had no other but unleavened bread to eat, so they should eat no other on this day and the six days following, in successive ages unto the coming of the Messiah.

{x} Mydbe tybm "e domo servorum", Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Vatablus, & Drusius.

Exodus 13:4

Ver. 4. **This day came ye out**,.... Out of Egypt, on the fifteenth of Nisan, as the Targum of Jonathan:

in the month Abib; which signifies an ear of corn, because in this month barley was in the ear, see [Ex 9:31](#), the Syriac version renders it, "in the month of flowers"; when the flowers were rising up out of the earth, being spring time, and a very fit time to travel in; and this is observed, not only because they might not know what month it was, in such a state of ignorance, as well as servitude, were they kept in Egypt; but as Jarchi also intimates, to point out to them the mercy and goodness of God to them, in bringing them out at such a seasonable time to travel in, when there were neither heat, nor cold, nor rain. This month answers to part of our March, and part of April.

[Exodus 13:5](#)

Ver. 5. **And it shall be when the Lord shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites,**.... Though the whole land was called the land of Canaan, yet there was one tribe or nation of them particularly so called as here, distinct from those that follow:

and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites; there were seven nations in all, but two are here omitted, the Girgashites and Perizzites, but they are added in the Septuagint version, see [De 7:1](#)

which he swore unto thy fathers to give thee; to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; so that they might be assured they would be brought into it, since they had both the word and oath of God for it; and which is the rather mentioned now for their encouragement, since they were at this time set forward in their journey thitherwards:

a land flowing with milk and honey; See Gill on "Ex 3:8",

that thou shalt keep this service in this month; the month of Abib; that is, the following service concerning unleavened bread; it is concluded from hence by some, that those laws concerning the passover, and eating unleavened bread, and sanctifying the firstborn, did not oblige the Israelites, while in the wilderness, only when they came into the land of Canaan; and it seems pretty clear that this was the case with respect to the two latter, but not the former, since it is certain they did keep the passover in the wilderness, and were obliged to it, [Nu 9:1](#) but then it may be observed, that there is no mention there of their keeping the feast of unleavened bread, only of the passover, as here no mention is made of the feast of the passover, which, though they followed one another, were, two distinct feasts.

[Exodus 13:6](#)

Ver. 6. **Seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread,**.... The Jews {y} gather from this place, and from [De 16:8](#), that the obligation to eat unleavened bread lasted no longer than the first night of the seven days, but on the rest it was enough if they abstained from leavened bread, and it was lawful for them to eat of other food as they pleased, See Gill on "Ex 12:15", but the words are very express in both places, and so in the following verse, for eating unleavened bread, as well as abstaining from leavened; and, indeed, otherwise it would not be so clear and plain a commemoration of their case and circumstances, in which they were when they came out of Egypt; this bread

of affliction, as it is called, [De 16:3](#) being what would put them in mind thereof:

and in the seventh day shall be a feast to the Lord; an holy convocation, in which no work was to be done, except what was necessary for preparing food to eat, see [Ex 12:16](#).

{y} In Siphre apud Manasseh Ben Israel. Conciliat. in loc.

[Exodus 13:7](#)

Ver. 7. **Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days**,.... From the evening of the fourteenth day, to the evening of the twenty first, [Ex 12:18](#), this is very express as before, that not only they were to abstain from leaven, but that they were obliged to eat unleavened bread; and as for the cakes of eggs and sugar the Jews now use, these, as Leo Modeua says {z}, are for those that are dainty and of tender stomachs and such as are sick, who eat unleavened bread also;

and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters:

See Gill on "Ex 12:15" and the above mentioned writer says {a},

"they begin before the passover, with all the diligence and care they can, to put away all leaven, or anything that hath had leaven in it, out of their houses, and out of their power; searching all their cupboards and bins, and cleansing the whole house and whiting it all over; and they provide themselves also of new utensils for their kitchen and table; or else they new make the old again, and scour them well; or else they have a select number of vessels set apart for the use of the passover only, that so they may be certainly assured that they use not anything during those eight days, that hath had leaven in it:"

and Aben Ezra upon the place says, that the sense of it is, that the Israelites ought not to suffer any to sojourn in any place subject to them, but on this condition, that they abstain from leavened bread at the time of the passover, and this he takes to be the meaning of the phrase, "in all thy quarters or borders".

{z} History of the Rites, &c. of the Jews, par. 3. c. 3. sect. 5. {a} Ib. sect. 4.

[Exodus 13:8](#)

Ver. 8. **And thou shall show thy son in that day**,.... On the first of the days of the feast of unleavened bread, the reason of eating it; and this is to be shown not to a son or single child only, but by parents to all their children, sons and daughters, and even unasked, as Maimonides {b} interprets it; and so Jarchi's note is, to a son that knows not how to ask or what to ask about, See Gill on "Ex 12:26" see Gill on "Ex 12:27":

saying, this is done because of that which the Lord did unto me, when I came forth out of Egypt: that is, this unleavened bread is eaten because of the quick and speedy deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, so that they had not time to leaven their dough.

{b} Hilchot Chametz Umetzah, c. 7. sect. 2, 3.

Exodus 13:9

Ver. 9. **And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes**,.... These are not the words of God or of Moses to the children of Israel, but of an Israelitish parent to his son, telling him that this feast of unleavened bread would serve the same purpose to refresh his memory with what God did for his people of old, as the tying of a thing on the hand, or placing it before the eye, is to a person to bring anything to his remembrance, to which the allusion is; the like figurative phrases may be observed in **Pr 1:9**, the Jews understand this literally, and hence the use of phylacteries among them, which they bind upon their left hand, and place upon their foreheads between their eyes, of which See Gill on "Mt 23:5", but such a practice could be of no use to answer the end next mentioned:

that the Lord's law may be in thy mouth; for surely this cannot be taken literally, but the sense is, that being instructed by the observance of the above feast, and being taught the meaning of it, they might be able to speak of it to their children, and so transmit it from age to age to their latest posterity:

for with a strong hand hath the Lord brought thee out of Egypt;
See Gill on "Ex 13:3".

Exodus 13:10

Ver. 10. **Thou shall therefore keep the ordinance in his season**,.... Not the ordinance of the phylacteries, as the Targum of Jonathan, but the ordinance of unleavened bread:

from year to year; every year successively, so long as in force, even unto the coming of the Messiah. It is in the Hebrew text, "from days to days" {c}; that is, either year after year, as we understand it; or else the sense is, that the feast of unleavened bread, when the season was come for keeping it, was to be observed every day for seven days running.

{c} hmymy Mymym "a diebus in dies", V. L. Montanus, Munster, Vatablus, Drusius.

Exodus 13:11

Ver. 11. And it shall be when the Lord shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites,.... Put for all the rest of the nations:

as he sware unto thee, and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee; to them as they were in their loins, and from thence might certainly conclude it would be given them.

Exodus 13:12

Ver. 12. That thou shalt set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the matrix,.... Or "the womb", as in [Ex 13:2](#), and this phrase, "set apart", explains the word "sanctify" there, and shows that it signifies the separating of such to the use and service of God, causing it to "pass", as the word {d} here used signifies, from a man's own power and use, to be the Lord's only:

and every firstling that cometh from a beast which thou hast; or "even every firstling" {e}, explaining what is meant by what opens the matrix or womb, even every firstborn of a beast; though Jarchi interprets it of an abortion, what comes before its time, that this also should be set apart to the Lord; this must be understood of the firstlings of clean creatures, fit for food and sacrifice, such as the firstlings of cows, sheep, and goats, [Nu 18:17](#) as distinguished from unclean ones in the following verse:

the males [shall be] the Lord's; which explains what sort of firstborn of man and beast were to be set apart for his use, not females, though the first that opened the womb; but males.

{d} trbehw "et transire facies", Pagninus, Montanus, Fagius, Vatablus, Drusius, Cartwright; so Ainsworth. {e} rjp lkw "etiam quicumque vel quicquid aperuerit", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Ainsworth.

Exodus 13:13

Ver. 13. **And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb**,.... Which was given to the priest for it; and according to the Jewish canon {f}, it might be redeemed with that only;

"not with a calf, nor with an animal (a goat or a ram, as Bartenora interprets it), nor with a lamb slain, or torn to pieces."

Jarchi thinks the ass only was to be redeemed, and not the firstling of any other unclean creature, but his reasons are insufficient; all unclean creatures, as horses, camels, dogs, swine, &c. are included in it, as should seem from [Nu 18:15](#) and this is the rather particularly mentioned, because there was a greater plenty of them than of horses and camels, and because they were very useful creatures; and if these were to be redeemed, then much more those of less value, and less useful. Hence might arise the story and calumny, as some have thought, of the Jews worshipping an ass's head:

and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shall break its neck; cut off its head on the back of the neck with a knife or cleaver, such as butchers use, as the Misnah {g}, and its commentators, interpret it, so that the owner should have no profit by it:

and all the firstborn of man amongst thy children shall thou redeem; with the price of five shekels of the sanctuary, and within thirty days of the birth of it, [Nu 18:16](#) and these being to be redeemed as the unclean beasts were, shows that men are by nature unclean, and even the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, the elect of God, and need redemption by the blood of the Lamb.

{f} Misn. Becerot, sect. 1. sect. 5. {g} Ibid. sect. 7. Maimon & Bartenora in ib.

Exodus 13:14

Ver. 14. **And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come**,.... Or "on the morrow" {h}, the day following such a separation of the firstborn of clean creatures, or such a redemption of the firstborn of unclean ones, and of man, or in any later time:

saying, what is this? what is the meaning of this? for what reason are such things done?

that thou shall say unto him, by strength of hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt from the house of bondage: by laying his mighty hand upon the firstborn of Egypt, and destroying them, which made the king of Egypt, and his people, willing to let Israel go; See Gill on "Ex 13:3".

{h} rxm "eras", Pagninus, Montanus, Tiguriue version.

Exodus 13:15

Ver. 15. **And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go,....** Showed great reluctance to it, and with difficulty was prevailed upon to dismiss them: that the Lord slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of men, and the firstborn of beast: which he did in one night, making use of a destroying angel or angels for that purpose: therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth thee matrix, being males; that is, the firstborn of all clean creatures, as oxen, sheep, and goats: but all the firstborn of my children I redeem; by paying five shekels apiece to the priest for them, as before observed; and this law continues to be observed with the Jews; the manner of which, as related by Leo Modena {i}, is as follows, "Thirty days being expired after the birth of the child, they call a priest to them; that is to say, one that is descended of the stock of Aaron, whom the father of the child pleaseth; and so, many people being gathered together at the time appointed, the father of the child bringeth before the priest, in a bowl or basin, a good quantity of gold and silver, and then they give him the child into his arms; the priest then calling the mother of it before him, saith unto her, mistress, is this your son? she answereth, yes; then, replies he, have you never had any child before, either male or female, or have miscarried anyone? she saith unto him, no; then doth the priest say, this child is mine, as being the firstborn; then turning himself toward the father, he asketh him, whether he will redeem it or not? who answereth him, saying, see, here is gold and silver, take your own price; then saith the priest unto him, you will redeem it then? the father answereth, I will redeem it; it shall be so then, saith the priest, this child is mine as being the firstborn, as it is written, Nu 18:16. I therefore take this in exchange, &c. and so he takes the sum of two French crowns, or thereabout, as he thinks good, and then delivers the child to his father and mother, and this day they make a feasting day." This custom was used in Christ's time, and was observed with respect to him, Lu 2:27. {i} History of the Jews, par. 4. c. 9. sect. 2.

Exodus 13:16 Ver. 16. **And it shall be for a token upon thine head, and for frontlets between thine eyes,....** These laws observed concerning the setting apart the firstlings of their beasts, the redemption of the firstborn of unclean ones, and of the firstborn of men, will bring the reason of it, the destruction of the firstborn of Egypt, and the preservation of the firstborn of Israel, as fresh to remembrance as any token upon the hand, put there to bring things to mind; and it will be as easily and as clearly discerned

as anything upon a man's forehead may be seen by another: for by strength of hand the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt: which is often mentioned, that it might be observed; it being the signs and wonders which the omnipotent hand of God wrought, especially the last, which worked upon Pharaoh, to let the people of Israel go; and their posterity, in all succeeding ages, would speak of this affair as if personally concerned in it, they being then in the loins of their ancestors, and represented by them, as well as they reaped and enjoyed all the benefits of that wonderful deliverance, the possession of the land of Canaan, and the blessings of it, as well as many other privileges both of a civil and religious kind. And so Maimonides {k} says, "in every age a man is obliged to consider himself as if he in himself now went out of the bondage of Egypt, as it is said, "and he brought us forth from thence", &c." {k} Hilchot Chametz Umetzah, c. 7. sect. 6. Exodus 13:17 Ver. 17. And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go,.... Gave them leave to depart out of Egypt, and even urged them to be gone in haste upon the death of his firstborn: that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; the land of the Philistines was the Pentapolis, or five cities of Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath, which lay between Egypt and Canaan; and their way through it to Canaan, out of Egypt, was the nearest they could go; and was, as Aben Ezra says, about ten days' journey; but Philo the Jew says {l} it was but three days' journey; and it seems, by the sons of Jacob going to and fro for corn, that it was no very long journey: for God said: within himself, or he declared the following reason of so doing to Moses: lest peradventure the people repent: which is said not as ignorant or doubtful, but, as Aben Ezra says, after the manner of men: when they see war: the Philistines coming out against them to hinder their passage through their country; they being a warlike people, bold and courageous, and the Israelites, through their long servitude, of a mean, timorous, and cowardly disposition; and indeed as yet unarmed, and so very unfit to engage in war, and therefore would at once be intimidated: and they return to Egypt; judging it more eligible to continue in their former bondage, than to fall a prey into the hands of such fierce and cruel enemies. This is the only reason mentioned for not leading them this way; but there were other secret reasons for it, which afterwards opened in Providence, as the doing that wonderful work for them, leading them through the Red sea as on dry land, and the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in it; and by being brought into a wilderness, a solitude, they would be in the fittest place to receive and attend to the body of laws given them, and where they were formed into a commonwealth and church state, previous to their entrance into, and possession of, the land of Canaan; and here also they were humbled, tried and proved, and had such instances of the power and goodness of God to them, as were sufficient to attach them to his service, and lay them under the greatest obligation to him, as well as would be of use to strengthen their faith and hope in him in future times of difficulty and distress. {l} De Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 627. Exodus 13:18 Ver. 18. But God led the people about,.... Instead of their going to the west, or northwest, towards Gaza,

&c. and the Mediterranean sea, the Lord going before them in a pillar of cloud and fire, as after related, directed them to turn off to the right, between the east and south, to the southeast:through the way of the wilderness of the Red sea: the wilderness of Etham, by the Red sea:and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt or "girt" {m} about the loins under the fifth rib; not with armour, as some {n} understand it, for it is not likely that they could, or that Pharaoh would suffer them to be furnished with armour, but their garments were girt about them, and so fit for travelling; or they went up "by fives" {o}, as it may be rendered, either by five in a rank, or rather in five bodies or squadrons, and so marched out, not in a disorderly and confused way, but in great order and regularity. The latter is much more reasonable to suppose, for five in a rank is too small a number for an army of 600,000 men to march in; since allowing the ranks to be but three feet asunder, and a mile to consist of about two thousand yards, the front and rear of the army would be sixty miles distant from each other {p}. {m} Myvmx "accincti", Fagninus, Vatablus, Cartwright; so Onkelos, Aben Ezra. {n} Kimchi & Pen Melech. {o} "Quintati", Montanus: "quini", Piscater, Rivet. {p} See the Bishop of Clogher's Chronology of the Hebrew Bible, p. 272.

Exodus 13:19Ver. 19. And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him,.... And his remains might well be called bones, since at such a distance from his death the flesh must be gone, and nothing but bones left; of the place where Joseph's coffin was laid, See Gill on "Ge 50:26". The Jews pretend, that Moses was informed where Joseph was buried by Sarah, the daughter of Asher, who they say was living at this time {q}; and many other fables they relate concerning the manner of finding him, which are not worthy of any notice. Jarchi thinks, that the bones of all the tribes, or of the sons of Jacob, were carried with them, but that does not appear from the text; though it seems, according to Stephen's account, that they were carried over to Canaan; but then, whether immediately after their death, or at this time, and also by whom, is not certain, see Ac 7:15:for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel; his brethren; or "in swearing had caused them to swear" {r}, had given them a very strict oath, and which they had related to their children, and so from one generation to another, and thus it became known, and Moses looked upon himself and the people of Israel as bound to observe it:saying, God will surely visit you; in a way of mercy and goodness, and bring you out of Egypt, and put you it possession of the land of Canaan:and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you;See Gill on "Ge 50:25". {q} T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 13. 1. {r} eybvh ebvh "adjurando adjuraverat", Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius.

Exodus 13:20Ver. 20. And they took their journey from Succoth,.... On the second day, as Jarchi observes, from their coming out of Egypt, which was the sixteenth of Nisan:and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness which had its name from it, and was called the wilderness of Etham, Nu 33:8. Etham is said to be eight miles from Succoth {s}. Josephus {t} calls Succoth Latopolis, which had its name from the fish Latus, formerly worshipped them, where, he says, Babylon was built when Cambyses destroyed Egypt, and is thought by many {u} to be the same with

Troglodytis, by the Red sea; and Etham is supposed to be the Buto of Herodotus {w}, where were the temple of Apollo and Diana, and the oracle of Latona. {s} Bunting's Travels, p. 81. {t} Antiqu. l. 2. c. 15. sect. 1. {u} See the Universal History, vol. 3. p. 387. {w} Enterpe, sive, l. 2. c. 59, 63, 83, 155. Exodus 13:21 Ver. 21. And the Lord went before them,.... Who is called the Angel of the Lord, Ex 14:19, not a created but the uncreated Angel, the Angel of Jehovah's presence, in whom his name, nature, and perfections were, even the Word and Son of God, the Lord Christ, see 1Co 10:9 who went before the armies of Israel, as their King, Leader, and Commander: by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; through the Red sea, and the wilderness, at the edge of which they now were, which was untrodden, and trackless, and the way through it very difficult to find; and being a sandy desert, as soon as a path was made, it was immediately covered with sand, and to be seen no more: this cloud was not an ordinary one, but extraordinary, supernatural, and miraculous; in the superior part of it, it was in the form of a pillar, rising upwards towards heaven; in the lower part of it, it was more spread, and covered the camp of Israel; for, besides the use of it to show the way through a trackless wilderness, it was a shelter and protection from the scorching heat of the sun in a sandy desert, where there was scarce anything to screen them from it, to which the allusion is in Isa 4:5 this cloud was an emblem of Christ, who has sometimes appeared clothed with a cloud, Re 10:1 of the obscurity of his human nature, of the fulness of grace in him, and being in the form of a pillar, of his uprightness, firmness, stability, and visibility in it; and of the use and benefit he is to his people, partly to show them the way in which they should go, by his Spirit and word, and lead them in it by his own example, whom it becomes them to follow, he being a wise, safe, and constant guide; and partly to shelter and protect them from the heat of a fiery law, from the flaming sword of justice, from the wrath of God, from the fiery darts of Satan, and from the furious persecution of wicked men, sometimes compared to the violent heat of the sun, So 1:6 and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; whenever they travelled by night, as they sometimes did, and in those hot countries it was very agreeable; and this pillar of fire gave them light when the moon shone not, and was a direction to them which way to go: sometimes it is night with the people of God, a night of darkness and desertion, of drowsiness, sleepiness, and carnal security, or of affliction and distress: Christ is the light and comfort of his people, and by his Spirit and word illuminates, guides, and directs them what to do, and where and how to walk: to go by day or night; to direct them in their journey, whether by night or day: this was but one pillar, though Aben Ezra thinks they were two; but it may be observed they are mentioned as one, and that the pillar of cloud in the night was a cloud of darkness to the Egyptians, and gave light to the Israelites, Ex 14:19, see also Nu 9:21 and it is easy to observe that what appears as a cloud or smoke in the daytime, looks like fire in the night: so when Alexander's army was on the march, as a signal, "fire was observed in the night, and smoke by day," as says the historian {x}: nor can, this account of Moses seem incredible to the Heathens themselves, as

Clemens of Alexandria observes {y}, since they relate a story somewhat similar to this, which they profess to believe; as, that when Thrasybulus brought the exile Grecians from Phyle, and willing to do it secretly, a pillar was his guide, and as he passed in the night through untrodden paths, when the moon shone not, and it was a dark winter night, a light was seen going before him, which brought them safe to Mynichia, and then left them: indeed this was not so extraordinary and miraculous, if true, as this pillar, as Bishop Patrick observes, because it was but for a night, whereas this continued all the forty years in the wilderness, until the Israelites came to Canaan's land, as follows: the Arabic geographer {z} speaks of exhalations arising out of caves at the sides of mountains, which in the daytime looked like smoke, and in the night time like fire. {x} Curtius, l. 5. c. 2. {y} Strom. l. 1. p. 348. {z} Climat. 3. par. 8. Exodus 13:22 Ver. 22. He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day,.... It always appeared in the daytime, and was a guide and shelter: nor the pillar of fire by night, [from] before the people; this continued till they came through the wilderness to the borders of the land of Canaan, when they needed it no longer, and then it left them; for when they passed over Jordan the ark went before them, Jos 3:6.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 14:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 14

This chapter begins with directions of God to Moses, to be given to the children of Israel about the course they were to steer in their journey, with the reason thereof, [Ex 14:1](#), which they observing, a report was brought to Pharaoh that they were fled, and this determined him and his servants to get ready and pursue after them, as they did with a great army, [Ex 14:5](#), which when the Israelites saw, it put them in great fear, and set them to murmuring and complaining against Moses for bringing them out of Egypt, [Ex 14:10](#), who desired them to be still and quiet, and they should see the salvation of the Lord, [Ex 14:13](#), and he is bid to order the people to go on in their journey, and to take his rod and stretch it over the sea and divide it, that Israel might pass through it on dry ground, and the Egyptians follow them, whereby God would be honoured and glorified, [Ex 14:15](#), upon which the Angel of the Lord in a pillar of cloud removed from before there, and went behind them for their protection, [Ex 14:19](#), and Moses stretching out his hand over the sea, and a strong east wind blowing upon it, the waters divided and the Israelites went into it, and the Egyptians followed them, but their host being troubled by the Lord, and their chariot wheels taken off, they found themselves in great danger, and were thrown into a panic, [Ex 14:20](#) and upon Moses's stretching out his hand again over the sea, the waters returned, and Pharaoh and his host were drowned, but the Israelites passed through safely, as on dry land, [Ex 14:26](#), which great work of the Lord being observed by them, influenced their fear of him, their faith in him and his servant Moses, [Ex 14:30](#).

Ver. 1. **And the Lord spake unto Moses**,.... Out of the pillar of the cloud in which he went before them; either while they were at Etham, or when journeying from thence, and a little before they turned off to the right, as they were now directed:

saying; as follows:

[Exodus 14:2](#)

Ver. 2. **Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn**,.... Not return to Egypt, or to the place, or towards the place from whence they came, but turn off, out of the road in which they were; for, as a late traveller says {a},

"there were two roads, through which the Israelites might have been conducted from Cairo (which he supposes may be Rameses) to Pihahiroth. One of them lies through the valleys, as they are now called, of Jendily, Rumaleah, and Baideah, bounded on each side by the mountains of the lower Thebais; the other lies higher, having the northern range of these mountains (the mountains of Mocatee) running parallel with it on the right hand, and the desert of the Egyptian Arabia, which lies all the way open to the land of the Philistines, on the left, (see [Ex 13:17](#)) about the middle of this range we may turn short on our right hand into the valley of Baideah, through a remarkable breach or discontinuation, in which we afterwards continued to the very banks of the Red sea; this road then, through the valley of Baideah, which is some hours longer than the other open road, which leads directly from Cairo to Suez, was in all probability the very road which the Israelites took to Pihahiroth, on the banks of the Red sea."

And again he says {b}, this valley ends at the sea in a small bay, made by the eastern extremities of the mountains, and is called "Tiah beni Israel", i.e. the road of the Israelites, from a tradition of the Arabs, of their having passed through it; as it is also called Baideah from the new and unheard of miracle that was wrought near it, by dividing the Red sea, and destroying therein Pharaoh, his chariots and horsemen:

and encamp before Pihahiroth: which was sixteen miles from Etham {c}, and by some {d} thought to be the same with the city of Heroes (or Heroopolis), on the extreme part of the Arabic gulf, or the Phagroriopolis, placed by Strabo {e} near the same place: according to the above traveller {f}, Pihahiroth was the mouth, or the most advanced part of the valley of Baideah to the eastward toward the Red sea; with which Jarchi in some measure agrees, who says Pihahiroth is Pithom, now so called, because the Israelites became free: they (Hahiroth) are two rocks, and the valley between them is called (Pi) the mouth of the rocks: so Dr. Shaw observes {g}; the word may be deduced from rx, "a hole" or "gullet", and by a latitude common in those cases, be rendered a narrow "defile", road or passage, such as the valley of Baideah has been described: but as the Israelites were properly delivered at this place from their captivity and fear of the Egyptians, [Ex 14:13](#) we may rather suppose that Hhiroth denotes the place where they were restored to their liberty; as Hhorar and Hhiroth are words of the like sort in the Chaldee: but another very learned man {h} says, that in the Egyptian language Pihahiroth signifies a place where grew great plenty of grass and herbs, and was contiguous to the Red sea, and was like that on the other shore of the sea, the Arabian, which Diodorus Siculus {i} speaks of as a pleasant green field:

between Migdol and the sea; which signifies a tower, and might be one: there was a city of this name in Egypt, and in those parts, but whether the same with this is not

certain, [Jer 44:1](#)

over against Baalzephon; which the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem take to be an "idol": and so does Jarchi, and say it was the only one left of the idols of Egypt; see [Ex 12:12](#) and so some Christian as well as Jewish writers suppose it to be; and that it was as a watch, or guard, or amulet, to keep fugitives from going out of the land: but by Ezekiel the tragedian {k} it is called a city; and so by Josephus {l}, who says they came to Baalzephon the third day, a place situated by the Red sea; which is most likely, and it is highly probable that this and Migdol were two fortified places, which guarded the mouth of the valley, or the straits which led to the Red sea: Artapanus {m} the Heathen historian agrees with Josephus in saying it was the third day when they came to the Red sea:

before it shall ye encamp by the sea; and there wait till Pharaoh came up to them.

{a} Dr. Shaw's Travels, p. 307. Ed. 2. {b} lb. p. 309. {c} Bunting's Travels, p. 82. {d} See the Universal History, vol. 3. p. 387. {e} Geograph. 1. 17. p. 553. {f} Shaw, ib. p. 310. {g} Ut supra. ({a}) {h} Jablonski de Terra Goshen, Dissert. 5. sect. 9. {i} Bibliothec. c. 3. p. 175. {k} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. 1. 9. c. 29. p. 444. {l} Antiqu. 1. 2. c. 15. sect. 1. {m} Apud Euseb. ib. c. 27. p. 436.

[Exodus 14:3](#)

Ver. 3. For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel,.... The Septuagint version adds, "to his people", his ministers and courtiers, when he hears where they are:

they are entangled in the land; have lost their way, and got into places they cannot easily get out of, and are perplexed in their minds, and do not know what way to take or course to steer:

the wilderness hath shut them in; or, "shut up the way to them" {n}; the wilderness between the mountains the above mentioned traveller speaks of {o} the mountains of Gewoubee; these would stop their flight or progress to the southward, as those of the Attackah would do the same towards the land of the Philistines; the Red sea likewise lay before them to the east, while Pharaoh (could) close up the valley behind them, with his chariots and his horsemen; and which, no doubt, appeared very advantageous and encouraging to him, as it must be very distressing to the Israelites.

{n} Mhyle rgo "clausit viam illis", Pagninus, "praeclusit sese illis", Vatablus. {o} Dr. Shaw's Travels, p. 309. Ed. 2.

Exodus 14:4

Ver. 4. **And I will harden Pharaoh's heart**,.... Once more, as he had often done:

that he shall follow after them: to Pihahiroth, and even into the sea after them:

and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; in his wisdom, faithfulness, power, and justice, by the destruction of them:

that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord; the only Jehovah, the Lord God omnipotent; even those that feel the weight of his hand while troubling their host, and bringing the waters upon them; especially those that shall remain in the land, and will not be involved in the catastrophe:

and they did so: the Israelites turned to the right to Pihahiroth, instead of going by Bishbesh and Tinah (Bubastis and Pelusium), and so along the sea coast towards Gaza and Ascalon, and encamped there between Migdol and the sea over against Baalzephon, as they were ordered and directed.

Exodus 14:5

Ver. 5. **And it was told the king of Egypt**,.... By some of the Egyptians, or mixed multitude that went out with Israel, but returned upon their encampment at the Red sea, or by some spies Pharaoh sent with them to observe their motions: the Targums of Jonathan and Jarchi make use of a word which Buxtorf translates military officers: and the latter says, they went out with them the three days' journey, but the Israelites not returning to Egypt (as expected), they tell Pharaoh of it the fourth day; and on the fifth and sixth he pursued them, and in the night of the seventh went into the sea after them, and on the morning they (the Israelites) sung the song, which was the seventh of the passover: these reported to Pharaoh:

that the people fled; that under a pretence of going three days' journey into the wilderness, to serve and sacrifice to the Lord, they were about to make their escape out of the land:

and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants were turned against the people; who had so much favour in their sight, not only to give them leave to go, and to hasten their departure, but to lend and give them things of great value; but now their hearts were

filled with hatred of them, and with malice and revenge:

and they said, why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us? not Pharaoh only, but his servants said so, even those who had entreated him to let them go, [Ex 10:7](#) yet now repent of it, and cannot think what reason they had to do it, when at that time they saw reason, and gave a very sufficient one, namely, the destruction of Egypt; but now the judgments and plagues of God being no more upon them, they recollect the great service of the Israelites to them and the benefits and advantages they had reaped by it, and the loss they had sustained by parting with them, and therefore reflect upon themselves for such a piece of conduct.

Exodus 14:6

Ver. 6. And he made ready his chariot,.... Which he usually rode in when he went forth to war; for this seems to be a military chariot, and not for show or grandeur; and this was got ready not by himself, as Jarchi, but rather by his orders, as Aben Ezra:

and took his people with him; the Greek version reads, "all his people"; not all his subjects, but his soldiers; at least a great number, and especially his cavalry.

Exodus 14:7

Ver. 7. And he took six hundred chosen chariots,.... The chief and best he had, war chariots, chariots of iron; perhaps such as had iron scythes to them, to cut down men as they drove along; these were taken partly for quickness of dispatch, that they might be able the sooner to overtake the Israelites, who had got several days' marches before them; and partly for their strength and the annoyance of their enemies with them:

and all the chariots of Egypt: as many as could in so short a time be got together: for the words are not to be taken in the utmost latitude, but to signify a great number, and all that could be conveniently come at: the Greek version is, "all the horse", the cavalry, which better distinguishes them from the former:

and captains over everyone of them: over everyone of the chariots, so that they must each of them have many in them, to have captains over them: and perhaps the infantry, or foot soldiers, for, quickness of expedition, were put into them; for, besides these, there were horsemen: Josephus {p} makes the whole number of his army to be 50,000 horse, and 200,000 foot, and the same number is given by a Jewish chronologer {q}: but Patricides, an Arabic writer, says {r} it consisted of 600,000, and

Ezekiel {s}, the tragic poet, has made it amount to a million of horse and foot: should it be asked where horses could be had to draw the chariots, and horses for the horsemen after mentioned, when all were destroyed by the hail, [Ex 9:25](#) it may be replied, that only those in the field were killed, not such as were in stables, where chariot horses and horses for war may be supposed to be: besides, as the Targum of Jonathan intimates, these might belong to these servants of Pharaoh who feared the word of the Lord, and took their cattle home, [Ex 9:20](#).

{p} Antiqu. l. 2. c. 15. sect. 3. {q} Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 77. 4. {r} Apud Hottinger. Smegma, p. 464. {s} Apud Euseb. ut supra. (Praepar. Evangel. c. 27. p. 436.)

[Exodus 14:8](#)

Ver. 8. [And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt,....](#) As he said he would, [Ex 14:4](#),

[and he pursued after the children of Israel;](#) took their rout in pursuit of them:

[and the children of Israel went out with an high hand:](#) not once dreaming they should be pursued by Pharaoh as an enemy, when they went out with his full consent, and with such pressing solicitations to be gone, and with so much favour shown them by the Egyptians; wherefore they set out, and went on with great boldness, courage, and intrepidity; "with an uncovered head", as the Targum of Onkelos, without any fear, and with great alacrity and cheerfulness; they carried both their heads and their hands high, were fearless and thoughtless of any danger when this mighty preparation was making against them.

[Exodus 14:9](#)

Ver. 9. [But the Egyptians pursued after them,....](#) When they thought nothing of it, and had no fears about it:

[all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army;](#) by the latter Aben Ezra understands the foot, as distinguished from the cavalry, the horses and horsemen; and perhaps these, as before observed, might be carried in the chariots for quicker dispatch:

[and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pihahiroth, before Baalzephon;](#)

where they had pitched their camp by divine appointment,
[Ex 14:2](#).

[Exodus 14:10](#)

Ver. 10. **And when Pharaoh drew nigh**,.... Or "caused to draw nigh" {t}; that is, his army, brought it very near to the camp of the Israelites:

the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; in great numbers, with full speed, threatening them with utter destruction:

and they were sore afraid; being an unarmed people, though numerous, and so unable to defend themselves against armed and disciplined troops; and besides, through their long time of slavery their spirits were broken, and were a mean, abject, dispirited people; and especially were so on the sight of the Egyptians, whom they had so many years looked upon and served as their lords and masters:

and the children of Israel cried out unto the Lord: had they prayed unto him in this their distress for help and assistance, protection and preservation, with an holy and humble confidence in him for it, they had acted a right and laudable part; but their crying out to him seems to be only an outcry of the troubles they were in, and rather the effect of despair than of faith and hope; and was by way of complaint and lamentation of their miserable condition and circumstances, as appears by what follows, which shows what temper of mind they were in.

{t} byrqh "fecit accedere", Pagninus, Montanus; "admovit castra", Junius & Tremellius.

[Exodus 14:11](#)

Ver. 11. **And they said unto Moses**,.... The Targum of Jonathan is,

"the ungodly of that generation said unto Moses;"

but it seems rather to be understood of the body of the people in general, and is not to be limited to some particular persons of the worse characters among them:

because there were no graves in Egypt; as if there had been none, when there were so many; the Egyptians being more solicitous about their graves than their houses, as

Diodorus Siculus reports {u}; thus upbraiding Moses in a sarcastic way for what he had done:

hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? that so there might be room and graves enough to bury them in, for nothing but death was before their eyes:

wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? which was very ungrateful and disingenuous.

{u} Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 47.

Exodus 14:12

Ver. 12. **Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt,**.... The thing they suggested to him, and talked with him about while they were in the land of Egypt, before they came out of it, particularly after their service and bondage were made more severe and cruel upon Moses and Aaron's demanding their dismissal, see [Ex 5:21](#):

saying, let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? peaceably and quietly, as we have been used to do, since there is no likelihood of being freed, and since we are more evilly treated than before:

for it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness: of such mean spirits were they, and had so poor a notion of, and taste for liberty, and so ungrateful were they to their deliverer.

Exodus 14:13

Ver. 13. **And Moses said unto the people,**.... Not in wrath and anger, but very coolly and sedately, agreeably to his character of the meekest man on earth; though what they had said to him was very insulting and provoking:

fear ye not; Pharaoh and his numerous host, do not be dismayed at them or possess yourselves with a dread of them, and of destruction by them:

stand still; do not stir from the place where you are, do not offer to run away, or to make your escape by flight (and which indeed seemed impossible), keep your place and station, and put yourselves in such a situation as to wait and observe the issue of things:

and see the salvation of the Lord which he will shew to you today; which is expressive of great faith in Moses in the midst of this extremity, who firmly believed that God would save them from this numerous and enraged army, and that very quickly, even that day; at least within twenty four hours, within the compass of a day; for it was the night following that salvation was wrought for them, and their eyes beheld it: and it may be called the salvation of the Lord, for it was his own hand that only effected it, the Israelites not contributing anything in the least unto it, and was typical of the great salvation which Christ with his own arm, and without the help of his people, has wrought out for them: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more for ever; that is, in such a posture or manner, no more armed, nor alive, and the objects of their fear and dread; for otherwise they did see them again, but then they were on the sea shore dead; for it should be rendered, not "whom", but "how", or "in what manner" {w}. {w} rva on tropon, Sept. "quemadmodum", Piscator; "quomodo", Noldius, p. 107. No. 544. Exodus 14:14 Ver. 14. The Lord shall fight for you,.... By commanding the wind of the heavens, and the waves of the sea, and employing them against their enemies, and on their behalf; they being unarmed, and so not in a condition to fight for themselves, as well as they had no heart or spirit for it: and ye shall hold your peace; be still, and quiet, and easy in your minds, and forbear saying or doing anything; "be silent"; and neither express the fear and distress of their minds, by any mournful sounds, nor their joy of faith by shouts and huzzas; as they could not draw a sword, they were not so much as to blow a trumpet, and break a pitcher, and cry the sword of the Lord, and of Israel as they after did on another occasion, at least their posterity. Exodus 14:15 Ver. 15. And the Lord said unto Moses, wherefore criest thou unto me?.... The Targum of Jonathan is, "why standest thou and prayest before me?" and no doubt this crying is to be understood of prayer, of mental prayer, of secret ejaculations put up by Moses to the Lord without a voice, for no mention is made of any: this shows, that though Moses most firmly believed that God would work salvation for them, yet he did not neglect the use of means, prayer to God for it; nor was the Lord displeased with him on that account, only he had other work for him to do, and he had no need to pray any longer, God had heard him, and would save him and his people: speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward; a little further, as Aben Ezra observes, until they were come to the sea shore, near to which they now were; and thither they were to move in an orderly composed manner, as unconcerned and fearless of their enemies. Exodus 14:16 Ver. 16. But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it,.... Even the same rod with which so many wonders had been done in Egypt; and Artapanus, the Heathen, says {x}, that Moses being bid by a divine voice to smite the sea with his rod, he hearkened to it, and touched the water with it, and so it divided, as it is said it did, Ex 14:21 and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea; and so they did, Ex 14:22. {x} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 436. Exodus 14:17 Ver. 17.

And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians,.... That they shall have no sense of danger, and be fearless of it, incautious and thoughtless, hurried on with wrath and fury, malice and revenge:and they shall follow them; the Israelites into the sea, supposing it to be as safe for the one as the other:and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen: by the utter destruction of them, in just retaliation for the many innocent infants that had been drowned by them in the river Nile. Exodus 14:18Ver. 18. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord,.... Acknowledge him to be Jehovah, the self-existent, eternal, and immutable Being, the one only living and true God, who is wise and powerful, faithful, just, and true; that is, those Egyptians that were left behind in Egypt, hearing what was done at the Red sea; for as for those that came with Pharaoh, they all perished to a man:when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen; by casting them into the sea, and drowning them there, thereby showing himself to be mightier than he. Exodus 14:19Ver. 19. And the Angel of God which went before the camp of Israel,.... The Jews say {y} this was Michael, the great prince, who became a wall of fire between Israel and the Egyptians; and if they understood by him the uncreated angel, the eternal Word, the Son of God, who is always in Scripture meant by Michael, they are right: for certainly this Angel of the Lord is the same with Jehovah, who is said to go before them in a pillar of cloud and fire, Ex 13:21:removed, and went behind them; but because removing from place to place, and going forwards or backwards, cannot be properly said of a divine Person, who is omnipresent, and fills every place and space; this is to be understood of the emblem of him, the pillar of cloud, as the next clause explains it:and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them; the Targum of Jonathan adds,"because of the Egyptians, who cast arrows and stones, and the cloud received them;"and so Jarchi; whereby the Israelites were protected and preserved from receiving any hurt by them: so Christ is the protection of his people from all their enemies, sin, Satan, and the world, that sin cannot damn them, nor Satan destroy them, nor the world overcome them; for his salvation is as walls and bulwarks to them, and he is indeed a wall of fire about them. {y} Pirke Eliezer, c. 42. Exodus 14:20Ver. 20. And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel,.... That is, the pillar of cloud, and the Angel of God, or Jehovah, in it, whereby the camp of Israel was secured from being annoyed by the camp of the Egyptians; and was an emblem of the gracious interposition of Christ between his spiritual Israel, whom he has redeemed by his blood, and their spiritual enemies, the Egyptians, the men of the world that hate them, from whose rage and malice Christ is their protection and safeguard:and it was a cloud and darkness [to them]; to the Egyptians; it cast a shade upon them, and made the darkness of the night still greater to them, so that they could not see their way, and knew not where they were:but it gave light by night to these; to the Israelites, so that they could see their way, and walk on in the midst of the sea, as on dry land; and such a light and guide they needed; for it was now the

twenty first day of the month, seven days after the full of the moon, when the passover began, and therefore could have no benefit from the moon. The Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem say, that half the cloud was light, and half darkness; and it seems plain from the account, that that side of it which was towards the Egyptians was dark, and that which was towards the Israelites was light, and so an hinderance to the one and a benefit to the other: thus Christ is set for the rising of some, and the fall of others; and his Gospel is to some the savour of death unto death, and to others the savour of life unto life; to the one it is a hidden Gospel, and lies in darkness and obscurity, and to others a great and glorious light:so that one came not near the other all the night; an emblem of that division and separation which the grace of God, the blood of Christ, and the light of the Gospel, make between the true Israel of God, and the men of the world; and which will continue throughout time, and to all eternity, so that they will never come near to each other; see Lu 16:26. Exodus 14:21 Ver. 21. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea,... With his rod in it, as he was directed to, Ex 14:16. What the poet says {z} of Bacchus is more true of Moses, whose rod had been lift up upon the rivers Egypt, and now upon the Red sea:and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night; and the direction of the Red sea being nearly, if not altogether, north and south, it was in a proper situation to be wrought upon and divided by an easterly wind; though the Septuagint version renders it a strong south wind. No wind of itself, without the exertion and continuance of almighty power, in a miraculous way, could have so thrown the waves of the sea on heaps, and retained them so long, that such a vast number of people should pass through it as on dry land; though this was an instrument Jehovah made use of, and that both to divide the waters of the sea, and to dry and harden the bottom of it, and make it fit for travelling, as follows:and made the sea dry land; or made the bottom of it dry, so that it could be trod and walked upon with ease, without sinking in, sticking fast, or slipping about, which was very extraordinary:and the waters were divided; or "after the waters were divided" {a}; for they were first divided before the sea could be made dry. The Targum of Jonathan says, the waters were divided into twelve parts, answerable to the twelve tribes of Israel, and the same is observed by other Jewish writers {b}, grounded upon a passage in Ps 136:13 and suppose that each tribe took its particular path. {z} "Tu flectis amnes, tu mare barbarum--" Horat. Carmin. l. 2. Ode 19. {a} weqbyw "quum diffidisset se aqua illius", Piscator; so w seems to be used in ch. xvi. 20. {b} Pirke Eliezer, c. 42. Targum Jon. & Hieros. in Deut. i. 1. Jarchi, Kimchi, and Arama in Psal. cxxxvi. 13. Exodus 14:22 Ver. 22. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground,... Some Jewish writers say {c}, that the tribe of Judah went in first, and then the other tribes followed; but it is most likely, what Josephus says {d}, that Moses first entered in, and then the Israelites, encouraged by his example, went in after him; and a very adventurous action it was, and nothing but strong faith in the almighty power and promise of God could have engaged them in it, to which the apostle ascribes it, Heb 11:29. It is the

opinion of Aben Ezra, and some other Jewish writers, that the Israelites did not pass through the Red sea to the opposite shore, only went some way into it, and took a compass in a semicircle, and came out on the same shore again, and which has been espoused by some Christian writers; and chiefly because they were in the wilderness of Etham before, and from whence they went into it, and when they came out of it, it was still the wilderness of Etham they came into, and went three days' journey into it seeking water; see Ex 13:20. Though it is possible the wilderness on the opposite shore might bear the same name, because of its likeness to it; and if it was the same wilderness that went round the Arabic gulf, or Red sea, and reached on to the other side of it, and so the wilderness of Etham lay on both sides, the difficulty is removed; for it seems most agreeable to the expressions of Scripture, that the Israelites passed through it from shore to shore. Others, in order to lessen the miracle, would have it that Moses, well knowing the country, and observing the tide, took the advantage of low water, and led the Israelites through it; and this story is told by the Egyptian priests of Memphis, as Artapanus {e} relates; but were the Egyptians less knowing of their country, and of the tide of the Red sea? and could Moses be sure of the exact time when they would come up to him, and the tide would serve him? Besides, the Egyptian priests at Heliopolis own the miracle, and relate it much as Moses has done; which must proceed from a conviction of the truth of it. And the above historian reports that the king (of Egypt) with a great army, and consecrated animals, pursued the Jews because of the substance they had borrowed of the Egyptians, which they took with them; but Moses being bid by a divine voice (or the voice of God, of Jehovah) to smite the sea with a rod, and hearkening to it, he touched the water with the rod, and so it divided, and his forces passed through a dry path, and the Egyptians attempting the same and pursuing, fire or lightning flashed out against them; and the sea shutting up the path again, partly by fire, and partly by the flow of the water, they all perished: and that this affair was miraculous, and could not be owing to any advantage taken from the tide, the following things have been observed; it is owned that the Red sea ebbs and flows like other seas that have a communication with the ocean, that is, the waters rise towards the shore during six hours, and having continued about a quarter of an hour at high water, ebb down again during another six hours; and it is observed by those who have examined it, that the greatest distance it falls from the place of high water is about three hundred yards; and that during the time of low water, one may safely travel it, as some have actually done; so that those three hundred paces, which the sea leaves uncovered during the time of low water, can continue so but for the space of half an hour at most; for during the first six hours, the sea retires only by degrees, and in less than half an hour it begins again to flow towards the shore. The most therefore that can be allowed, both of time and space of passable ground, in a moderate computation, is about two hundred paces, during six hours, or one hundred and fifty paces, during eight hours. Now it is further observed, that it is plain that a multitude consisting of upwards of two millions and a half of

men, women, children, and slaves, encumbered besides with great quantities of cattle, household stuff, and the spoils of the Egyptians, could never perform such a march within so short a time; we may say within even double that space, though we should allow them also double the breadth of ground to do it on. This argument, it is added, will hold good against those who suppose they only coasted along some part of the sea, and those who maintain that they crossed the small arm or point of it which is toward the further end, near the isthmus of Suez; seeing that six or eight hours could not have sufficed for the passage of so immense a multitude, allow them what breadth of room you will; much less for Pharaoh to have entered it with his whole host {f}: and for the confirmation of the Mosaic account of this affair, and as miraculous, may be observed the testimony of Diodorus Siculus, who reports {g} that it is a tradition among the Ichthyophagi, who inhabit near the Red sea, or Arabic gulf, which they have received from the report of their ancestors, and is still preserved with them, that upon a great recess of the sea, every place of the gulf became dry, the sea falling to the opposite parts, the bottom appeared green, and returning back with a mighty force, was restored to its place again; which can have reference to nothing else but to this transaction in the time of Moses. And Strabo {h} relates a very wonderful thing, and such as rarely happens, that on the shore between Tyre and Ptolemais, when they of Ptolemais had a battle with the Emperor Sarpedon at that place, and there being put to flight, a flow of the sea like an inundation covered those that fled, and some were carried into the sea and perished, and others were left dead in hollow places; after a reflux followed, and discovered and showed the bodies of those that lay among the dead fishes. Now learned men have observed {i}, that what is here said of the sea of Tyre is to be understood of the Red sea, and that Sarpedon is not a proper name, but the same with Nwdp rv, "Sarphadon", the prince of deliverance, or of the delivered, as Moses was: and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left; some of the Jewish Rabbins from Ex 15:8 have supposed that the waters were frozen as they were drove back by the east wind, and so stood up firm while the Israelites passed through, and then another wind thawed them, which brought them upon the Egyptians; but no doubt this was done by the wonderful interposition of divine power, and perhaps the ministry of angels was made use of, to detain and continue them in this position, until the end was answered. Adrichomius says {k}, the breadth of the sea was six miles at the passage of the Israelites; but a late traveller {l} tells us, that the channel between Sdur (or Shur, on the opposite side) and Gibbel Gewoubee, and Attackah (which he supposes was the place of their passage), was nine or ten miles over. Thevenot says {m}, that during the space of five days he kept along the coast of the Red sea, in going to Mount Sinai, he could not observe it to be anywhere above eight or nine miles over. A later traveller {n} tells us, that from the fountains of Moses may be plainly seen a wonderful aperture (Pihahiroth; see Ex 14:2) in the mountains on the other side of the Red sea, through and from which the children of Israel entered into it, when Pharaoh and his host were drowned; which aperture is

situated west-southwest from these fountains of Moses, and the breadth of the sea hereabouts, where the children of Israel passed it, is about four or five hours' journey. The Arabic geographer {o} calls the place Jethren, where Pharaoh and his host were drowned; and represents it as a dangerous place to sail in, and where many ships are lost, and that this rough place is about the space of six miles. A countryman {p} of ours, who had been in these parts, guesses that the breadth of the place (called by the Mahometans, Kilt el Pharown, the well or pit of Pharaoh) where the Israelites are said to pass through is about six or seven leagues; the difference between these writers may be accounted for by the different places where they suppose this passage was. {c} Pirke Elizer, c. 42. {d} Antiqu. l. 2. c. 16. sect. 2. {e} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 436. {f} Universal History, vol. 3. p. 392, 393. marg. {g} Bibliothec. l. 3. p. 174. {h} Geograph. l. 16. p. 521, 522. {i} Vid. Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 1. p. 167. {k} Theatrum Terrae, p. 123, 124. {l} Dr. Shaw's Travels, p. 314. Edit. 2. {m} Travels into the Levant, B. 2. ch. 33. p. 175. {n} A Journal from Grand Cairo, &c. in 1722. p. 13. Edit. 2. {o} Climat. 3. par. 3. {p} Pitts's Account of the Mahometans, p. 77. Exodus 14:23 Ver. 23. And the Egyptians pursued,.... The Israelites going forwards towards the sea as they were ordered, and going into it:and went in after them into the midst of the sea; which if fearful of, they might conclude it was as safe for them to go in as for the Israelites; but perhaps through the darkness of the night, and the eagerness of their pursuit, they might not perceive where they were, nor the danger they were exposed unto:even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen: which is observed to show, that as all that did go in perished, not one was saved, as after related, so all he brought with him, the whole of his army, went in, so that all that went out of Egypt were destroyed. Exodus 14:24 Ver. 24. And it came to pass, that in the morning watch,.... The Romans divided the night into four watches, so the Hebrews; though some say into three only. The first began at six o'clock, and lasted till nine, the second was from thence to twelve, the third from thence to three in the morning, and the last from three to six, which is here called the morning watch; so that this was some time between three and six o'clock in the morning:the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians, through the pillar of fire and of the cloud; the Angel of the Lord, and who was Jehovah himself, who was in it, he looked to the army of the Egyptians; not to know whereabouts they were, he being the omniscient God; nor in a friendly manner, but as an enemy, with indignation and wrath. The Targum of Jonathan is,"he looked through the pillar of fire, to cast upon them coals of fire, and through the pillar of cloud, to cast upon them hailstones."The Jerusalem Targum is,"pitch, fire, and hailstones;"and Josephus {q} speaks of storms and tempests, of thunder and lightning, and of thunderbolts out of the clouds; and Artapanus {r} of fire or lightning flashing out against them, by which many perished. Perhaps the psalmist may have reference to this in Ps 106:10and troubled the host of the Egyptians; the thunder and lightning no doubt frightened the horses, so that they broke their ranks, and horsemen and chariots might run foul on one another, and the hailstones scatter

and destroy many; however, the whole must be terrible and distressing to them, especially it being in the night season. {q} Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 2. c. 16. sect. 2.) {r} Apud Euseb. ut supra. (Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 436.) Exodus 14:25Ver. 25. And took off their chariot wheels,.... The Targum of Jonathan renders it "cut" or "sawed them off"; perhaps they might be broken off by the hailstones. Milton {s} seems to have a notion of Pharaoh's chariot wheels being broken, when he says, "and craze" (i.e. break) "their chariot wheels"; or, as Jarchi suggests, he burnt them, through the force of the fire or lightning:that they drave them heavily; the wheels being off, the chariots must be dragged along by the horses by mere force, which must be heavy work; or, "and made them to go, or led them heavily", or "with heaviness" {t}; and so to be ascribed to the Lord, who looked at the Egyptians, took off the wheels of their chariots, and stopped them in the fury of their career, that they could not pursue with the swiftness they had:so that the Egyptians said, let us flee from the face of Israel; for by this battery and flashes of fire on them, they concluded that Israel, who they thought were fleeing before them, had turned and were facing them, and the Lord at the head of them; and therefore it was high time for them to flee, as follows:for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians; for they rightly took the thunder and lightning, the fire and hailstones, to be the artillery of heaven turned against them, and in favour of the Israelites. Jarchi interprets it, the Lord fights for them in Egypt, even in Egypt itself; but so he had done many a time before, of which they were not insensible. {s} Paradise Lost, B. 12. ver. 210. {t} tdbkb Mghnyw "et deduxit eos graviter", Vatablus; "et duxit eos cum gravitate", Drusius; so Ainsworth. Exodus 14:26Ver. 26. And the Lord said unto Moses,.... Out of the pillar of fire and of the cloud, when the Egyptians were in all the confusion before described, and about to make the best of their way back again:Stretch out thine hand over the sea; with his rod in it, by which all the wonders were wrought, and particularly by which the sea had been divided, and now it must be used to a different purpose:that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen; the waters which stood upright as a wall, on the right and left, might be no longer kept in such a position, but fall down upon the Egyptians, their chariots and horsemen, being higher than they. Exodus 14:27Ver. 27. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea,.... Or towards it, as he was ordered, the rod being in his hand, as before observed:and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; being no longer detained by a superior power, contrary to the nature of it, to stand still as an heap, and firm as a wall, its waves came down and rolled with their usual force and strength, or it returned to its usual course:at the appearance of the morning in its strength; when the morning looked forth in its first light and brightness, when it was broad day:and the Egyptians fled against it; against the waves that came rolling down upon them: or "at meeting it" {u}, for as they turned their backs on the Israelites and fled, the waters of the sea met them, as well as fell on each side of them, or rather over them, and followed after them, and closed and shut them up on all sides; so that it was in vain

for them to flee, for let them go which way they would, the sea was against them:and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea; or shook them "off" or "out" {w}; out of their chariots, blew them out with the wind; for as there was a wind made use of to divide the waters of the sea, and make the bottom of it dry, there was another to cause the waters to return to their former place; see Ex 15:10 or the waves of the sea dashed them out of their chariots, or through the force of them they were overturned in it. {u} wtarql "in occursum ejus", Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius; "obviam mare", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. {w} renyw exetinaxe Sept. "et excussit", Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius; "sic excussit", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. Exodus 14:28Ver. 28. And the waters returned,.... To their place, and so in the above tradition related by Diodorus Siculus, it is said that the sea returning with a mighty force was restored to its place again;See Gill on "Ex 14:22".and covered the chariots and the horsemen; the wall they made being much higher than a man on horseback, when they fell down, covered even those who had the advantage of horses and chariots; and much more must the infantry be covered by them, who may be meant in the next clause:and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; the foot, that went into the sea after the chariots and horsemen, or the whole army, including the cavalry and infantry, which went into the sea after the children of Israel. Who this Pharaoh was is not agreed; according to Berosus {x} his name was Cenchres, or Chenchres, whom Acherres succeeded; according to Bishop Usher {y} it was Amenophis; but our English poet {z} calls him Busiris; though Strabo {a} says there was no king or governor of that name. Diodorus Siculus {b} indeed speaks of two so called; yet he elsewhere {c} says, not that there was any king of the name, only the sepulchre of Osiris was so called:there remained not so much as one of them; wherefore it must be a falsehood which is related by some, that Pharaoh himself was preserved, and afterwards reigned in Nineveh {d}, since not one was saved; see Ps 106:11 and so Artapanus {e} the Heathen says, they all perished, and among these are said {f} to be Jannes and Jambres, the magicians of Egypt mentioned in 2Ti 3:8 but this is contradicted by those {g} who ascribe the making of the golden calf to them. {x} Antiqu. l. 5. fol. 88. 2. & 90. 2. {y} Annal. Vet. Test. p. 19. {z} "----- whose waves o'erthrew Busiris, and his Memphian chivalry." Milton's Paradise Lost, B. 1. v. 306, 307. {a} Geograph. l. 17. p. 552. {b} Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 42. {c} Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 79. {d} Dibre Hayamim, fol. 13. 2. {e} Ut supra. (Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27. p. 436.) {f} Midrash in Exod. xv. 10. & Arab. MS. apud Gregory's Notes & Observ. p. 6. {g} Shalshalet, fol. 7. 1. Exodus 14:29Ver. 29. But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea,.... The bottom of it becoming so through the strong east wind, which blew all night until they came to the opposite shore, where they landed on "terra firma"; and so Noldius renders the phrase "through the sea"; that is, from shore to shore:and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left; See Gill on "Ex 14:22". Exodus 14:30Ver. 30. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians,.... For though it was

now six or seven days since they had leave to go out of Egypt, and actually did depart, yet they could not be said properly to be saved, or to be in safety, till this day, when all the Egyptians their enemies were destroyed, that pursued after them; and this was the twenty first day of the month, and the seventh and last day of the passover, and was an holy convocation to the Lord; See Gill on "Ex 12:16" and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the sea shore; all along, as a late traveller {h} observes, as we may presume, from Sdur (or Shur) to Corondel, and at Corondel especially, from the assistance and termination of the current there. The word for "dead" {i} is in the singular number, and joined with a plural may denote that they saw everyone of the Egyptians dead, since they were all destroyed, and not one remained of them, as in Ex 14:28. Aben Ezra thinks the sense of the words is, not that the Egyptians were seen dead upon the sea shore, but that the Israelites standing upon the sea shore saw the dead bodies of the Egyptians, that is, floating on the waters of the sea; but rather the meaning is, that their dead bodies were by the force of the waters cast upon the shore, and there beheld and plundered by the Israelites. Josephus {k} observes, that the day following (that night the Egyptians were drowned) the arms of the Egyptians being cast on the shore where the Hebrews encamped, through the force of the sea and wind, Moses gathered them up and armed the Hebrews with them; and this will account for it how they came to have arms, since it is highly probable they came out of Egypt unarmed; and how they could fight battles as they did in the wilderness, and when they came into the land of Canaan. {h} Shaw's Travels, p. 314. Ed. 2. {i} tm Mortuum, Montanus, Drusius. {k} Antiqu. 1. 2. c. 16. sect. 6. Exodus 14:31 Ver. 31. And Israel saw the great work,.... Or "hand" {l}; the hand of the Lord, the mighty power of God, and took notice of it, and seriously considered the greatness of it: which the Lord did upon the Egyptians; which mighty hand he laid upon them, and which great power he exercised on them, and which great work, the effect thereof, he wrought in destroying them in such a manner, by causing the waters, which divided for them and their safety, to return upon the Egyptians to their utter destruction: and the people feared the Lord; had an awe of his power and greatness upon their minds, and a sense of his goodness to them upon their hearts, which influenced their fear of him, and caused them to fear him with a filial and godly fear: and believed the Lord and his servant Moses; they believed the Lord to be the only Jehovah, the supreme Being, the one only living and true God, faithful to his word, able to do all things, and wise to do them in the fittest season, for his own glory and his people's good; and they believed his promises, and the fulfilment of them; and that as he had now saved them out of the hands of the Egyptians, he would bring them to the land of Canaan, which he had promised their fathers to give unto them; and they believed Moses was sent of God to be their deliverer out of Egypt, and to be their leader to the promised land; see Ps 106:12 and who were now by the apostle said to be baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 1Co 10:1 and of their passage through the Red sea under the direction

of Moses being an emblem of baptism, See Gill on "1Co 10:1".{1} dyh thn ceira Sept.
Manum, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 15:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 15

This chapter contains the song of Moses, and of the children of Israel, on the banks of the Red sea; in which they celebrate their passage through it, the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in it, and the glory of the divine perfections displayed therein, interspersed with prophetic hints of things future, [Ex 15:1](#) which same song was sung by the women, with Miriam at the head of them, attended with timbrels and dances, [Ex 15:20](#), an account is given of the march of the children of Israel from the Red sea to the wilderness of Shur, and of the bitter waters found at Marah, which occasioned a murmuring, and of their being made sweet by casting a tree into them, [Ex 15:22](#) when they were told by the Lord, that if they would yield obedience to his commandments, they should be free from the diseases the Egyptians had been afflicted with, [Ex 15:26](#), and the chapter is concluded with their coming to Elim, where they found twelve wells of water, and seventy palm trees, and there encamped, [Ex 15:27](#).

Ver. 1. **Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord,**.... Which is the first song recorded in Scripture, though no doubt before this time songs of praise were sung to the Lord; the people of God having occasion in all ages more or less to sing his praises. The Jews {n} speak of ten songs, the first of which was sung by Adam, when his sins were forgiven him, and this song of Moses is the second; though sometimes they say {o}, from the creation of the world to the standing of Israel by the Red sea, we do not find that ever any man sung a song but Israel; God created the first man, but he sang no song: however, this is the first on record, and is a typical one; Moses the composer of it, and who bore a principal part in it, and was the deliverer of the people of Israel, was a type of Christ, the Redeemer of his church: and Israel that joined with him in it, and were the persons delivered, were typical of the spiritual Israel of God redeemed by Christ; and the deliverance here celebrated bore a great resemblance to the redemption wrought out by him; and Christ, the Angel of the Lord, that went before the Israelites through the Red sea, and fought for them, is the principal person concerned in it, and who is meant by the Lord throughout the whole of it, and to whom it is sung; and a song upon a similar occasion to this will be sung in the latter day, upon the destruction of spiritual Egypt, or antichrist, and is called the song of Moses and the Lamb in allusion to it, [Re 15:3](#) The Jews {p} say, this shall be sung at the time, when the wicked shall perish out of the world, and observe that it is not written *rv*, "then sung", but *ryvy*, "then shall sing", &c. Moses had reason to sing, since God had heard his prayer,

and had done him honour before the people, and he was both an instrument of and a sharer in the salvation wrought; and the children of Israel had reason to sing, inasmuch as they were a people chosen of God, and distinguished by him; were redeemed from bondage, called out of Egypt, and now saved out of the hands of their enemies, who were all destroyed, and they brought safely through the Red sea, and landed on firm ground. And the time when they sung this song was then, when they had passed through the sea on dry land; and when they had seen the Egyptians their enemies dead on the sea shore; and when they were in a proper frame of spirit to sing, when they had taken notice of and considered what great and wonderful things the Lord had done for them, and their minds were suitably impressed with a sense of them; when they were in the exercise of the graces of the fear of God, and faith in him, and which is necessary to the performance of all religious duties, and particularly this of singing the praises of God:

and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord: that went before them in a pillar of cloud and fire; who had led them safely through the Red sea, and troubled and destroyed the host of the Egyptians; even the same Jehovah, who has undertaken the salvation of his people, is become the author of it, and to whom the song of redeeming grace is due:

for he hath triumphed gloriously; over Pharaoh and all the Egyptians, the enemies of Israel, as Christ has over sin, in the destruction of it by his sacrifice, and over Satan, and his principalities and powers, when he spoiled them on the cross, and over death the last enemy, and all others; over whom he has made his people more than conquerors, through himself: or, "in excelling he excels" {q}; all the angels of heaven, in his name, and nature, relation, and office; and all the sons of men, even the greatest among them, being King of kings, and Lord of lords; in the wonderful things done by him, no such achievements having ever been wrought by any of them: or, "in magnifying, he is magnified" {r}; appears to be what he is, great in his nature, perfections, and works; and to be magnified, or declared to be great, and extolled as such by all that know and fear him;

the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea; the horses and horsemen of Pharaoh; and which is not amiss allegorically applied, by Tertullian {s}, to the world and the devil; the world is the horse, and the rider the devil; that being under his power and direction, he being the god of it, and working effectually in it; spurring and exciting the men of it to every sinful lust and pleasure; and may be put for all the spiritual enemies of God's people, especially their sins; which are cast by the Lord into the midst of the sea, never to be seen and remembered any more, and which is to them matter of a song of praise and thanksgiving.

{n} Targum in Cant. i. 1. {o} Shemot Rabba, sect. 23. fol. 107. 3. {p} Tikkune Zohar,

correct. 10. fol. 20. 2. {q} hag hag "excellendo excelluit", Piscator. {r} "Magnificando magnificatus est", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus. {s} Contr. Marcion, l. 4. c. 20.

[Exodus 15:2](#)

Ver. 2. **The Lord is my strength and song**,..... The strength of Moses and the children of Israel against the fears of the Egyptians, and of entrance into the Red sea; who inspired them with courage, and strengthened their faith, neither to fear being destroyed by the one, or drowned in the other; and so in the glory of his nature, and of his divine perfections, of his justice, holiness, faithfulness, truth, and goodness, he was the subject matter of their song. As Christ is the strength of his spiritual Israel, the author and giver of strength unto them, the strength of their lives, their hearts, and graces; and who strengthens them to do his will and work, to exercise every grace, withstand corruptions, resist temptations, bear afflictions, and overcome every enemy; and who on the account of the glory of his person, the beauty, fitness, and fulness of it, and because of his offices of Mediator, Saviour, prophet, priest, and King, as well as by reason of what he has done for them, the righteousness he has brought in, and the salvation he has wrought out, is the sum and substance of their song of praise:

and he is become my salvation; the salvation of Israel in a temporal sense, having saved them out of the hands of the Egyptians their enemies; and the salvation or Saviour of his spiritual Israel, who are saved by him with an everlasting salvation; he is not only their Saviour, but salvation itself; being not only the author of it, and that being in him for them, but made that itself unto them, even their all in all; their righteousness, atonement, peace, light, life, food, health, comfort, and joy; all their grace being in him, and from him, as well as their eternal glory and happiness: and this he is to them now, he is their salvation by impetration having obtained it by his obedience, sufferings, and death; and by application, they being convinced of their need of salvation by him, and the suitableness of it to them, seek to him for it, desire that and no other, which is brought nigh unto them by the Spirit of God, and witnessed to by him as theirs; so that they are already saved by grace, through faith and hope in Christ; and of their particular interest in it, they have knowledge by the same Spirit, which fills them with joy unspeakable and full of glory. This and the preceding clause are words so very expressive, and contain such fulness of matter, and such interesting things, that both the psalmist David, and the church, in the times of the evangelic prophet Isaiah, have borrowed them to express their sense of the great things the Lord was to them, and had done for them, [Ps 118:14](#)

he [is] my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; Christ is God, truly God, as appears from the names given him, particularly Jehovah; from the perfections ascribed

to him, from the works done by him, and from the worship of him both by angels and men; and he is his people's God, their Immanuel, God in their nature, the God in whom they believe, and in whom they have an interest; he is the God of their salvation, the Lord their righteousness; their Lord, head, and King; their husband, beloved, Father, brother, friend; their God and guide, even unto death; their portion and exceeding great reward, now and hereafter: wherefore Moses, or the people of Israel, or both, determine to "prepare" him an "habitation", being concerned that he had no better dwelling place among them than he had; and seem to have some respect unto, and knowledge of an habitation hereafter to be built, the tabernacle and temple; which were typical of the human nature of Christ, and of his church; but then they were both of God's preparing, and not men's; wherefore an habitation in the hearts of, his people may be chiefly designed; the preparation of which, though it is principally and efficaciously of the Spirit of God, yet in some sense may be said to be prepared by the saints, when they show a concern for grace to be in exercise; to have duty regularly and constantly performed in a manner acceptable to him, and that no disturbance be given to occasion his departure from them. The Septuagint version is, "I will glorify him"; with soul and body, which are both his; and so much to the same purpose other versions, "I will decorate or beautify" {t} him; declare his beauty and glory, and speak in praise of it: "my father's God, and I will exalt him"; Christ was not only the God of Amram, the father of Moses, who was a good man; but the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as he declared himself to be, [Ex 3:6](#), the ancestors not only of Moses, but of all the children of Israel. This shows the antiquity of Christ, that he was their fathers' God, and that he is to be trusted and depended on, as he was by their fathers, and to be regarded, and highly valued and esteemed, having been their fathers' friend, and is a reason why he should be exalted by them; for though he cannot be raised higher than he is, being the Son of the Highest, God over all, blessed for ever, whose kingdom ruleth over all, and is now as man ascended on high, and is highly exalted by his Father, and at his right hand, and glorified by him with himself; yet he may be said to be exalted and lifted up by us, when we celebrate and set forth the height of his glory and excellency, by asserting his proper deity, ascribing the same perfections, worlds, and worship to him, as to his Father, by attributing distinct divine personality to him, confessing his eternal sonship, owning him in all his offices, and giving him the glory due unto him on account of them, and for salvation wrought out by him; the whole honour and praise of it belong to him: he may and should be exalted in the hearts of his people, in their thoughts and affections, and with their lips in songs of praise; and in the house of God, and the ordinances of it, where everyone should speak of his glory; the reasons are, because he is above all in his person and perfections, is the only Mediator, Saviour, and Redeemer, and to exalt him is the way to be exalted, [Pr 4:8](#).

{t} whwnaw doxazw auton Sept. "glorificabo eum", V. L. "laudabo eume", Syr.

Samar. "hunc decorabo", Tigurine version; "condecorabo eum", Piscator.

Exodus 15:3

Ver. 3. **The Lord is a man of war**,.... A "man", which has respect to the future incarnation of Christ, for as yet he was not really man; though it was purposed, covenanted, agreed to, and prophesied of, that he should, as he after was; not a mere man, as appears by the following clause: "a man of war"; or a warrior; being engaged in war, and inured to it; having to do with very powerful enemies, Satan and his principalities and powers, the world, and the great men of it, antichrist, and all the antichristian states. A warrior well versed in all the arts of war, and abundantly qualified for it, having consummate wisdom, strength, and courage, and thoroughly furnished and accoutred for it; having on the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation, the garment of vengeance, and cloak of zeal, and a vesture dipped in blood; and with a sword girt on his thigh, or drawn, or coming out of his mouth; and with a bow and arrows, going forth conquering, and to conquer; for he is a victorious one, who has conquered sin, Satan, and the world, and will subdue all others, and make his people more than conquerors, through him. He is not a common man of war or warrior; he is the Captain of the Lord's host, the Leader and Commander of the people, the Generalissimo of the armies in heaven and earth, and is a Prince and King at the head of them:

the Lord is his name; or Jehovah, which proves him to be more than a man; and being so, it is no wonder that he is so mighty, powerful, and victorious.

Exodus 15:4

Ver. 4. **Pharaoh's chariots and his hosts hath he cast into the sea**,.... Which was done by the Angel of the Lord, who was Jehovah himself, our Immanuel, and man of war, as appears from [Ex 14:17](#), an emblem of the destruction of antichrist, and all the antichristian states, of which Pharaoh and his host were types:

his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea: who were appointed over his chosen chariots, which all perished in the sea together. In the carnage that will be made by Christ, the warrior and conqueror, among the followers of antichrist, the man of "sin", the antitypical Pharaoh, the flesh of captains is mentioned for the fowls of heaven to feed upon, [Re 19:18](#).

[Exodus 15:5](#)

Ver. 5. **The depths have covered them**,.... The depths of the sea covered Pharaoh and his host, so as to be seen no more; and in like manner will mystical Babylon, or antichrist, be destroyed, and be no more found and seen; as likewise the sins of God's people, being cast into the depths of the sea, and covered with the blood of Christ, will be seen no more; when they are sought for, they shall not be found:

they sunk into the bottom as a stone; into the bottom of the sea, as a stone thrown into anybody of water sinks and rises not up again; this circumstance is observed by [Ne 9:11](#)

their persecutors thou threwest into the deep, as a stone into the mighty waters; and thus a stone like a millstone being taken by an angel and cast into the sea, is made an emblem of the irrecoverable ruin and destruction of Babylon, or antichrist, [Re 18:21](#).

[Exodus 15:6](#)

Ver. 6. **Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power**,.... In bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt, and through the Red sea, and in the destruction of Pharaoh and the Egyptians; and so the right hand of Christ, expressive of his power, he has in and of himself, and is the same with his Father's, and is mighty, yea, almighty, is become glorious, famous, and illustrious, in the redemption and salvation of his people, by bearing their sins, and working out a righteousness for them; and in the destruction of their enemies, sin, Satan, the world, and death, as is more fully expressed in the next clause:

thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy; in a literal sense, Pharaoh and his host, the avowed enemies of Israel; and, in a spiritual sense, those before named, together with all the antichristian party, those enemies of Christ, and his people, whom he wilt break to shivers as a potter's vessel, [Re 2:27](#).

[Exodus 15:7](#)

Ver. 7. **And in the greatness of thine excellency**,.... Christ has an excellency in him, a greatness of excellency, a superlative one; he has a more excellent name and nature than the angels, being a divine Person; and a more excellent ministry, as man and Mediator, than any of the sons of men, as prophet, priest, and King; and is superlatively excellent in his operations, has wrought out a most excellent

righteousness, offered up a more excellent sacrifice than ever was offered, and obtained a great, glorious, and excellent salvation for his people; in consequence of which is what is next asserted:

thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee; against his person and his people, who are in such strict union with him as to be reckoned as himself; and those that rise up against them, he reckons as rising up against him, or as his enemies; and both the one and the other are overthrown by him, as were those that rose up against him in person when on earth, as Herod, Pontius Pilate, the people of the Jews, with the Gentiles, and as will be antichrist and his followers, and all the spiritual enemies of the people of God:

thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble; the wrath of the Lord God Almighty is like fire, and wicked men are as chaff and stubble; and as those cannot stand before fire, but are suddenly and quickly consumed with it; so neither can the wicked, the enemies of Christ and his people, stand before the wrath of the Lamb, when the great day of it is come, but must be presently destroyed by it; see [Isa 51:20](#).

Exodus 15:8

Ver. 8. **And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together**,.... From the bottom of the sea, and divided and laid on heaps; and this by a strong east wind, called the blast of the nostrils of the Lord, because as easily brought by him as a man's breath or wind is drawn through his nostrils; and thus Christ with the breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming, will destroy antichrist, [2Th 2:8](#)

the floods stood upright as an heap; though a fluid body, yet by the power of Christ were raised up and continued upright, firm and consistent; as things dry and solid may be laid and heaped up on one another, and remain firm and stable; and so did the waters of the sea, they stood like a wall, and were as firm as a rock; while the Israelites passed between them, they stood upright, and lift up their hands, as if they blessed them; or blessed God for the deliverance of them, or in admiration of it; see [Ex 14:22](#),

Exodus 15:9

Ver. 9. **The enemy said**,.... That is, Pharaoh, who repented that he had let Israel go; an emblem of Satan, who when the people of God are taken out of his hands is uneasy at

it, and seeks to recover them again into his possession; or of antichrist breathing out threatening and slaughter to the saints, the reformers departed from him, and delivered out of his captivity:

I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; which words being expressed without the copulative "and", show the passion he was in, the hastiness of his expressions, and the eagerness of his mind; and being delivered in such an absolute manner, "I will", "I will", &c. denote not only the fixed resolution and determination he had made to pursue, but the assurance he had of carrying his point; he thought as surely, as he pursued he should overtake, and overtaking should conquer, and get into his hands all the riches the people of Israel went out of Egypt with:

my lust shall be satisfied upon them; both his lust of covetousness to possess himself of the wealth the people had of their own, and which they had spoiled the Egyptians of, by borrowing of them; and also his lust of revenge and cruelty upon them; as appears from what follows:

I will draw my sword; out of its scabbard, and sheathe it in them:

my hand shall destroy them; which he made no doubt of, they being an unarmed people; and therefore, though numerous, were unable to engage with him, and defend themselves; see [Re 6:14](#) and with it compare [Isa 10:11](#).

[Exodus 15:10](#)

Ver. 10. **Thou didst blow with thy wind,**.... A strong east wind, [Ex 14:22](#) which is the Lord Christ's, who has it in his treasury, holds it in his fists, sends it out as he pleases, and it fulfils his word and will:

the sea covered them; which stood up in an heap as a wall to let Israel pass through, and fell down with all its waves and billows with great force upon the Egyptians, and covered and drowned them:

they sunk as lead in the mighty waters; which is a very heavy metal, and, being cast into the water, sinks to the bottom at once, as did the Egyptians in the Red sea, and as Babylon the great will, and never rise more, [Re 18:21](#).

[Exodus 15:11](#)

Ver. 11. **Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods?**.... For the perfections of his nature, for the blessings of his goodness, and for the works of his hands; and especially for the greatness and excellency of his power, seen in the salvation of his people, and the ruin of their enemies: there is none like him "among the mighty ones", as it may be rendered; among the mighty angels, who excel in strength, and are sometimes called gods; or among the mighty ones on earth; or the sons of the mighty, kings, princes, judges, and civil magistrates of every rank and order; especially for the following things:

who is like thee, glorious in holiness? some understand this of the holy place, either heaven, where Christ is glorious above all created beings; or the church, where he shows himself glorious to his people: others, of holy persons, either holy angels, among whom he was at Sinai, and when he ascended on high, and will be when he comes again, in his own and his Father's glory; or the saints, when he will bring them with him, and be glorified in them; but rather it is to be understood of the attribute of his holiness, which is eminently and perfectly in him; in his person, with respect to both his natures, divine and human; the glory of which is displayed in all the works he has wrought, especially in the great work of redemption, which was undertaken both for the honour of the holiness and righteousness of God, and to redeem his people from sin, and make them righteous and holy: it appears in the holy doctrines he taught, and in the holy commandments and ordinances he enjoined his people, and in his judgments on his enemies; in all which it is plainly seen that he loves righteousness and hates iniquity, and there is none like him for it; there is none holy as the Lord among angels or men, [1Sa 2:2](#)

fearful in praises; or, in the things for which he is to be praised; as the glories and excellencies of his person, the blessings received from him, and through him, both temporal and spiritual; grace, and all the blessings of it here, now communicated, and glory and happiness promised and expected: and many things, for which he is to be praised, he is "fearful", awful, and tremendous in them; there are some things his right hand teaches him, and it does, deserving of praise, which yet are terrible, and such were they which are here literally, referred to; the plagues upon the Egyptians, and the destruction of Pharaoh and his host, called the wondrous works done in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red sea, [Ps 106:22](#) and yet these were matter of praise to Israel, and gave occasion for this song; and such are they, in a spiritual sense, which he has done to his and our enemies: when the year of his redeemed was come, it was a day of vengeance in his heart, and he exercised it; he made an end of sin, abolished death, destroyed him which had the power of it, and spoiled principalities and powers; and a dreadful slaughter will be made of antichrist and his followers, when the song of Moses and the Lamb will be sung on account of it; and such dispensations of Providence, and judgments on men, as on Pharaoh and antichrist, as

they are terrible to wicked men, they strike an awe on the people of God, at the same time they furnish out a song of praise to them: moreover, this may respect not only the matter of praise, but the reverend manner in which it is performed by good men; who, as they have a concern that they cannot sufficiently praise the Lord, and fear they shall not perform it aright, and sensible of their weakness and imperfection, like the seraphim, cover their faces while they applaud his perfections, particularly that of his holiness, and declare the earth is full of his glory; so they desire to perform this, as all their other services, with a holy fear and trembling, with reverence and godly fear since holy and reverend is his name: it follows,

doing wonders; and for which there is none like him; wonders Christ did before his incarnate state, both in eternity, in the goings forth of his heart, in acts of love to his people, in asking for them, and betrothing them, in becoming the surety of them, in proposing to be a sacrifice in their stead, in entering into a covenant with his Father on their account, in taking the care and charge of their persons, and in being the treasury of all grace and glory for them; and likewise in time, being concerned in the wondrous works of creation, which are a wonderful display of divine wisdom, power, and goodness, and in all the affairs of Providence; for there was not any remarkable occurrence, from the beginning of the world to the time of his coming in the flesh, but he was concerned therein; as the drowning of the old world, to whom previously he preached by his Spirit in Noah; the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, the plagues of Egypt, and the destruction of Pharaoh and his host, the deliverance of the children of Israel, both out of Egypt and Babylon, and many others: and when he became incarnate, how many wonders were wrought by him? the incarnation itself was a wonderful instance of his grace and condescension, to take upon him the nature of man, be made flesh, and dwell among them; and during his incarnate state on earth many wonders were done by him; the doctrines he taught, the miracles he wrought, and especially the great work of our redemption and salvation, which will be for ever the wonder of men and angels; his raising himself from the dead, his ascension to heaven, and his appearance there for his people, as well as his second coming to judgment, are all marvellous things; and on account of all this, and more, he may well be called "wonderful"; for working wonders there is none like him.

[Exodus 15:12](#)

Ver. 12. **Thou stretchedst out thy right hand**,.... That is, exerted his power, and gave a display and proof of it; of which the right hand is an emblem:

the earth swallowed them; meaning Pharaoh and his host; for though they were drowned in the sea, that being a part of the terraqueous globe, they may be said to be

swallowed in the earth; as Jonah, when in the depth of the sea, the earth and its bars are said to be about him, [Jon 2:6](#) and besides, many of Pharaoh's army might be swallowed up in the mud at the bottom of the sea: nor is it improbable that those that were cast upon the banks and sand, whom the Israelites stripped, might be afterwards swallowed up therein.

[Exodus 15:13](#)

Ver. 13. **Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed,**.... From their servitude and bondage in Egypt; and so they were the Lord's people, peculiar to him, and distinct from all others: those he led forth, as out of Egypt, so through the Red sea onward towards Canaan's land; which was owing to his mercy, pity, and compassion to them in their affliction and distress: thus the spiritual Israel are a people redeemed by Christ from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law, and are his property, special and peculiar to him, and distinguished from all others: those he leads forth out of the state of nature in which they are, which is a very uncomfortable one, dark, bewildered, and forlorn, and out of their own ways, both of sin and self-righteousness; he leads them in himself the true way to eternal life, and in the paths of faith, truth, and holiness; and he leads to himself, his blood, righteousness, and fulness, and into his Father's presence, into his house and ordinances, and at last to heaven, the city of their habitation: and though it is sometimes in a rough way he leads them thither, yet always in a right one; and this must be ascribed to his grace and mercy, and not to the merits of his people: it was owing to his mercy he engaged for them as a surety, and came into this world to be their Saviour, in his love and pity he redeemed them; and it is according to abundant mercy they are regenerated, and called, and saved:

thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation; or rather, "art guiding them" {w}; for as yet they were not brought to their rest, the land of Canaan, where God had chosen a place for his people and himself to dwell in; nor was the tabernacle as yet made, much less the temple, where Jehovah took up his residence; but as he had brought out his people Israel from Egypt with a strong hand, and mighty arm, he was guiding and directing them onward in their journey, in the same greatness of his strength, which he would and did continue, until he brought them to the place he had chosen for his habitation; which was typical, both tabernacle and temple, of the human nature of Christ, in which the fulness of the Godhead dwells, and which is holy, being perfectly free from sin, and to which the people of God are guided as the new and living way to the Father, and whereby they have communion with him: likewise they were an emblem of the church of God, where Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, dwell, and which consists of holy persons, and where holy services are

performed; and hither the Lord guides and directs his people, and where he gives them a nature and a place better than that of sons and daughters; and also of heaven, where the Lord dwells, and which is the habitation of his holiness, where are holy angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and into which none shall enter but those that are holy; and hither the Lord guides all his people, with his counsel, and by his Spirit and word, and by his almighty power brings them thither;

{w} tlhn "commode ducis", Junius & Tremellius.

[Exodus 15:14](#)

Ver. 14. **And the people shall hear, and be afraid,**.... What follows from hence to the end of the song is plainly prophetic, a prediction of future events; and this clause respects the case of all the nations of the earth, who should hear the report of the plagues, brought upon the Egyptians for the sake of Israel, and of their being brought out of Egypt, and of their being led through the Red sea as on dry land, and of the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in it, which report would strike a panic in all that heard it, throughout the whole world; as well as of what the Lord would after this do for them in the wilderness, see [De 2:25](#)

sorrow shall take hold of the inhabitants of Palestina; which was adjoining to the land of Canaan, and through which in the common way their road lay to it.

[Exodus 15:15](#)

Ver. 15. **Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed,** &c,] Of which there were many, see [Ge 36:15](#) the land being first governed by dukes, as perhaps it was at this time, though in some few years after it had a king, [Nu 20:14](#) now these, when they heard of the wonderful things that were done for Israel in Egypt, at the Red sea, and in the wilderness, were astonished and surprised, and filled with fear and dread, see De 2:4, the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them: as did on Balak the king of Moab, and his people, Nu 22:2, where may be observed a literal accomplishment of this prophecy: all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away; as their hearts did, through fear, when they heard what God did for Israel against the Egyptians and the Amorites, and understood that they were upon the march to their land to invade it and dispossess them of it: see the fulfilment of this prediction in Jos 2:9 thus when Babylon shall be destroyed, as Pharaoh and his host were, and the people of God saved out of the midst of her, as Israel was, the kings of the earth will stand afar off for fear of her torment, and bewail and lament for her, Re 18:9. Exodus

15:16 Ver. 16. Fear and dread shall fall upon them.... On the several nations and people before mentioned, especially the Canaanites, which the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem interpret of the fear of death, lest the Israelites should fall upon them and destroy them, or God should fight for them, against them, and bring ruin and destruction on them: by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; awed by the power of God, visible in what he had done for the Israelites, and upon their enemies; they should be like stocks and stones, immovable, have no power to act, nor stir a foot in their own defence, and against Israel, come to invade and possess their land; nor in the least molest them, or stop them in their passage over Jordan, or dispute it with them, but stand like persons thunderstruck, and as stupid as stones, not having any spirit or courage left in them: till thy people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over, which thou hast purchased; pass over the brook of Arnon, and the ford of Jabbok, according to the Targum of Jonathan; or the ford of Jabbok, and the ford of Jordan, according to the Jerusalem Targum; the river of Jordan is doubtless literally meant, at least chiefly; and the accomplishment of this prediction may be seen in Jos 3:15 which was an emblem of the quiet passage of Christ's purchased people, through the ford or river of death, to the Canaan of everlasting rest and happiness: Christ's people are purchased by him, who is able to make the purchase, and had a right to do it, and has actually made it, by giving his flesh, shedding his blood, laying down his life, and giving himself a ransom price for them: these do, and must pass over Jordan, or go through the cold stream of death; it is the way of all the earth, of good men as well as others; it is a passage from one world to another; and there is no getting to the heavenly Canaan without going this way, or through this ford; and all the Lord's purchased people, like Israel, clean pass over through it, not one are left in it; their bodies are raised again, their souls are reunited to them, and both come safe to heaven and happiness: and, for the most part, they have a quiet and easy passage, the enemy is not suffered to disturb them, neither the sins and corruptions of their nature, nor an evil heart of unbelief, nor Satan with his temptations; and the terrors of death are taken away from them; so that they can sit and sing on the shores of eternity, in the view of death and another world, saying, death, where is thy sting? grave, where is thy victory? &c. and this is to be ascribed to the greatness of Jehovah's arm, to his almighty power, on which they lean, and go on comfortably in the wilderness; and by this they are carried safely through death to glory, and it is owing to this that the enemy and the avenger are stilled. Exodus 15:17 Ver. 17. Thou shalt bring them in,.... Into the land of Canaan, which is often ascribed to the Lord, as well as his bringing them out of the land of Egypt, see De 8:8, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance; in the country which he chose for the inheritance of his people and himself; one part of which was very mountainous, called the hill country of Judea, and especially Jerusalem, round about which mountains were; and particular respect may be had to Mount Moriah and Zion, on which the temple afterwards stood, and which was called the mountain of the Lord's house, and seems to be pointed at in the

following account: here Israel is compared to a vine as elsewhere, which the Lord took out of Egypt and planted in the land of Canaan, where it took root and was settled, see Ps 80:8 in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in; that is, which he had appointed for his habitation; for as yet neither the tabernacle nor temple were built, in which he afterwards dwelt: in this sense the word "made" is used in Pr 16:4 in the sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established; that is, which he intended to establish, and would, and did establish; meaning, more especially, the temple, and the holy of holies in it, which he directed Solomon to build, and was a settled dwelling place for him, 1Ki 8:13, now all this may be considered as typical of the church of Christ, and of his bringing and planting his people there, which is a "mountain", and often signified by Mount Zion; is visible and immovable, the true members of it being interested in the love of God, on the sure foundation of electing grace, secured in the everlasting covenant, and built on the rock Christ Jesus; and is the Lord's "inheritance", chosen by him to be so, given to Christ, and possessed by him as such, and as dear to him, and more so, than a man's inheritance is to him: this is a "place" he has appointed, prepared, and made for himself to dwell in, and is the habitation of Father, Son, and Spirit; and is a "sanctuary" or holy place, consisting of holy persons established in Christ, as particular believers are, and the church in general is; and though now sometimes in an unsettled state as to outward things, yet ere long will be established on the top of the mountains: and hither the Lord brings his purchased people, as sheep into his fold, as children to his house, fitted up for them, as guests to partake of his entertainments; and this is an act of his powerful grace upon them, and of his distinguished goodness to them: and here he also plants them, for the church is a plantation, a garden, an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; and such as are planted here are transplanted out of the world, and are first planted in Christ, and receive the ingrafted word; and though ministers may be instruments in planting, the Lord is the efficient; and those that are planted by him are choice pleasant plants, fruitful ones, and shall never be plucked up: but as this follows the passage of the Lord's people over Jordan into Canaan land, it may rather be considered as an emblem of the heavenly state, and of the Lord's bringing and planting his people there; which, like a mountain, is an immovable and unalterable state, an inheritance incorruptible and eternal, the dwellingplace of Jehovah, a sanctuary or holy place, which his hand prepared from the foundation of the world; and which he has established as everlasting habitations for his people, where he brings their souls at death, and both souls and bodies in the resurrection morn to dwell with him for ever; and which is a paradise, an Eden of pleasure, where he plants them as trees of righteousness, next to Christ the tree of life, and where they are always green, fruitful, flourishing, and shall never be hurt by any scorching heat or blasting wind, or be trodden under foot or plucked up. Exodus 15:18 Ver. 18. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever. Even that same Lord that is spoken of throughout this song, and to whom everything in it is ascribed, and who is no other than the Lord Jesus Christ; his

reign began in eternity, when he was set up and anointed as King over God's holy hill of Zion, his church, the elect, who were a kingdom put under his care and charge, and which he will deliver up again one day, complete and perfect: he reigned throughout the whole Old Testament dispensation, and was acknowledged as well as prophesied of as a King; in his state of humiliation he had a kingdom, though not of this world, and upon his ascension to heaven he was made and declared Lord and Christ; and thenceforward his kingdom became very visible in the Gentile world, through the ministration of his word, accompanied by his almighty power; and ever since, more or less, he has ruled by his Spirit and grace in the hearts of many of the children of men, and, ere long, will take upon him his great power, and reign, in a more visible, spiritual, and glorious manner, in the midst of his churches, in the present state of things; and then he will reign with all his saints raised from the dead, for the space of a thousand years on earth, and after that will reign with them for ever in heaven, in the ultimate state of glory and happiness: the reigns of all others are but short, or, however, but for a time, but the reign of Christ is for ever and ever; the reigns of sin, and of Satan, and of death, have an end, but of the government of Christ, and the peace thereof, there will be no end; the reigns of the greatest potentates, emperors, and kings, of cruel and tyrannical princes, such as Pharaoh, are limited to a certain time, as is the reign of antichrist, which when ended, and the saints will have got the victory over him, the song of Moses and the Lamb will be sung; but Christ's kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is evermore: the Targum of Jonathan is, "let us set a crown on the head of our Redeemer, whose is the royal crown, and he is King of kings in this world, and whose is the kingdom in the world to come, and whose it is and will be for ever and ever;" and to the same purpose is the Jerusalem Targum.

Exodus 15:19 Ver. 19. For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea,.... Meaning not that particular and single horse on which Pharaoh was carried, but all the horses of his that drew in his chariots, and all on which his cavalry was mounted; these all went into the Red sea, following the Israelites thither: these words are either the concluding part of the song, recapitulating and reducing into a compendium the subject matter of it; or are a reason why Moses and the children of Israel sung it; or else they are to be connected more strictly with the preceding verse, and give a reason why the Lord reigns over his people for ever; because he has destroyed their enemies, and delivered them out of their hands: and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them; after he had divided them, for the Israelites to pass through them, he caused them to close again, and to fall upon the Egyptians and cover and drown them: but the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea; which was a very wonderful thing, and was a just and sufficient reason for singing the above song to the Lord, see Ex 14:29. Exodus 15:20 Ver. 20. And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron,.... The same, it is highly probable, that is called the sister of Moses, Ex 2:3, her name Miriam is the same as Mary with us, and signifies bitterness; and, as the Hebrews {x} observe, had it from the

bitterness of the times, and the afflictions the Israelites endured and groaned under when she was born; which is a much more probable signification and reason of her name than what is given by others, that it is the same with Marjam, which signifies a drop of the sea; from whence, they fancy, came the story of Venus, and her name of Aphrodite, the froth of the sea: Miriam was a prophetess, and so called, not from this action of singing, here recorded of her, for so all the women that sung with her might be called prophetesses, though sometimes in Scripture prophesying intends singing; but rather from her having a gift of teaching and instructing, and even of foretelling things to come; for the Lord spoke by her as well as by Moses and Aaron, and she, with them, were the leaders of the people of Israel, sent to them of the Lord, see Nu 12:2, she is particularly called the sister of Aaron, though she was likewise the sister of Moses; the reason is, that being older than Moses, she was Aaron's sister before his, and having lived all her days with Aaron almost, and very little with Moses, was best known by being the sister of Aaron; and it is possible she might be his own sister by father and mother's side, when Moses was by another woman; however, it is said of her, she took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances; timbrels were a sort of drums or tabrets, which being beat upon gave a musical sound, somewhat perhaps like our kettledrums; and though dances were sometimes used in religious exercises, yet the word may signify another kind of musical instruments, as "pipes" or "flutes" {y}, as it is by some rendered; and by the Syriac and Arabic versions, "sistrums"; which were musical instruments much used by the Egyptians, and from whom the Israelitish women had these; and as they were going to keep a feast in the wilderness, they lent them to them, it is very probable, on that account; otherwise it is not easy to conceive what use the Israelites could have for them, and put them to during their hard bondage and sore affliction in Egypt: now with these they went out of the camp or tents into the open fields, or to the shore of the Red sea, and sung as Moses and the men of Israel did: to this the psalmist seems to refer in Ps 68:25. {x} Seder Olam Rabba, c. 3. p. 9. Dibre Hayamim, fol. 2. 2. {y} tlxmb "cum fistulis", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; "cum tibiis", Drusius; so Ainsworth. Exodus 15:21 Ver. 21. And Miriam answered them,.... The men, for the word is masculine; that is, repeated, and sung the same song word for word after them, as they had done, of which a specimen is given by reciting the first clause of the song: sing ye to the Lord; which is by way of exhortation to the women to sing with her, as Moses begins the song thus: "I will sing unto the Lord", for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea; See Gill on "Ex 15:1", the manner of their singing, according to the Jews {z}, was, Moses first said, "I will sing", and they said it after him. {z} T. Hieros. Sotah, fol. 20. 3. T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 30. 2. Exodus 15:22 Ver. 22. So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea,.... Or "caused them to journey" {a}, which some think was done with difficulty, they being so eager and intent upon the spoil and plunder of the Egyptians cast upon the sea shore, the harness of their horses being, as Jarchi observes, ornamented with gold and silver, and

precious stones; or as others, they had some inclination to return to Egypt, and take possession of the country for themselves; the inhabitants of it, at least its military force, being destroyed, and their armour in their possession; but the truer meaning of the word is, that Moses, as their general, gave them the word of command to march, and till they had it they stayed at the Red sea refreshing themselves, taking the spoils of the enemy, and singing the praises of God; but when Moses gave them orders to set forward, they proceeded on their journey: and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; the same with the wilderness of Etham, as appears from Nu 33:8 there might be, as Aben Ezra conjectures, two cities in or near this wilderness, of those two names, from whence it might be called: for, as Doctor Shaw says {b}, Shur was a particular district of the wilderness of Etham, fronting the valley (of Baideah), from which, he supposes, the children of Israel departed: and Doctor Pocock says {c} that the wilderness of Shur might be the fourth part of the wilderness of Etham, for about six hours from the springs of Moses (where, according to the tradition of the country, the children of Israel landed, being directly over against Clysma or Pihahiroth) is a winter torrent, called Sedur (or Sdur), and there is a hill higher than the rest, called Kala Sedur (the fortress of Sedur), and from which this wilderness might have its name: and by another traveller {d} this wilderness is called the wilderness of Sedur: and now it was the wilderness of Etham they were in before they went into the Red sea, which has induced some to believe that they came out on the same shore again; for the solution of which difficulty See Gill on "Ex 14:22", and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water; which must be very distressing to such a vast number of people and cattle, in a hot, sandy, desert: this doubtless gave occasion to the stories told by Heathen authors, as Tacitus {e}, and others, that the people of the Jews, under the conduct of Moses, were near perishing for want of water, when, following a flock of wild asses, which led them to a rock covered with a grove of trees, they found large fountains of water: the three days they travelled here were the twenty second, third and fourth, of Nisan, in the beginning of April. {a} eoyw "et fecit proficisci", Pagninus & Montanus, Drusius; "jussit proficisci", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. {b} Travels. p. 312. {c} Travels, p. 156. {d} Journal from Cairo, &c. p. 13. {e} Hist. l. 5. c. 3.

Exodus 15:23 Ver. 23. And when they came to Marah,.... A place in the wilderness, afterwards so called from the quality of the waters found here; wherefore this name is by anticipation: they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter; and they must be very bitter for people in such circumstances, having been without water for three days, not to be able to drink of them: some have thought these to be the bitter fountains Pliny {f} speaks of, somewhere between the Nile and the Red sea, but these were in the desert of Arabia; more probably they were near, and of the same kind with those that Diodorus Siculus {g} makes mention of, who, speaking of the Troglodytes that inhabited near the Red sea, and in the wilderness, observes, that from the city Arsinoe, as you go along the shores of the continent on the right hand, there are several rivers that gush out of the rocks into the sea, of a bitter taste: and so Strabo

{h} speaks of a foss or ditch, which runs out into the Red sea and Arabian gulf, and by the city Arsinoe, and flows through those lakes which are called bitter; and that those which were of old time bitter, being made a foss and mixed with the river, are changed, and now produce good fish, and abound with water fowl: but what some late travellers have discovered seems to be nearer the truth: Doctor Shaw {i} thinks these waters may be properly fixed at Corondel, where there is a small rill, which, unless it be diluted by the dews and rain, still continues to be brackish: another traveller {k} tells us that, at the foot of the mountain of Hamam-El-Faron, a small but most delightful valley, a place called Garondu, in the bottom of the vale, is a rivulet that comes from the afore mentioned mountain, the water of which is tolerably good, and in sufficient plenty, but is however not free from being somewhat bitter, though it is very clear: Doctor Pocock says there is a mountain known to this day by the name of Le-Marah; and toward the sea is a salt well called Bithammer, which is probably the same here called Marah: this Le-Marah, he says, is sixteen hours south of the springs of Moses; that is, forty miles from the landing place of the children of Israel; from whence to the end of the wilderness were six hours' travelling, or about fifteen miles; which were their three days' travel in the wilderness, and from thence two hours' travel, which were five miles, to a winter torrent called Ouarden; where, it may be supposed, Moses encamped and refreshed his people, and from thence went on to Marsh, about the distance of eight hours, or twenty miles southward from the torrent of Ouarden: therefore the name of it is called Marah; from the bitterness of the waters, which the word Marah signifies; see Ru 1:20. {f} Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 29. {g} Bibliothec. l. 3. p. 172. {h} Geograph. l. 17. p. 553. {i} Travels, p. 314. {k} A Journal from Grand Cairo to Mount Sinai, A. D. 1722, p. 14, 15. Exodus 15:24 Ver. 24. And the people murmured against Moses,.... For bringing them into a wilderness where they could find no water fit to drink; saying: what shall we drink? what shall we do for drink? where can we drink? this water is not drinkable, and, unless we have something to drink, we, and our wives, and children, and servants, and cattle, must all perish. Exodus 15:25 Ver. 25. And he cried unto the Lord,.... Or prayed, as all the Targums, that God would appear for them, and relieve them in their distress, or, humanly speaking, they must all perish: happy it is to have a God to go to in time of trouble, whose hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that he cannot hear! Moses knew the power of God, and trusted in his faithfulness to make good the promises to him, and the people, that he would bring them to the land he had sworn to give them: and the Lord shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet; what this tree was is not known; if it was in its own nature sweet, as the author of Ecclesiasticus seems to intimate, when he says, in chapter 38:5 "was not the water made sweet with the wood, that its virtue might be known?" Yet a single tree could never of itself sweeten a flow of water, and such a quantity as was sufficient for so large a number of men and cattle; and therefore, be it what it will, it must be owing to a miraculous operation that the waters were made

sweet by it: but the Hebrew writers say the tree was bitter itself, and therefore the miracle was the greater: Gorionides {l} says it was wormwood; and both the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem call it the bitter tree, Ardiphne, which Cohen de Lara {m} makes to be the same which botanists call Rhododaphne or rose laurel, and which, he says, bears flowers like lilies, which are exceeding bitter, and are poison to cattle; and so says Baal Aruch {n}; and much the same has Elias Levita {o}: and this agrees well enough with the mystical and spiritual application that may be made of this; whether these bitter waters are considered as an emblem of the bitter curses of the law, for that bitter thing sin, which makes work for bitter repentance; and for which the law writes bitter things against the sinner, which, if not prevented, would issue in the bitterness of death; so that a sensible sinner can have nothing to do with it, nor can it yield him any peace or comfort: but Christ, the tree of life, being made under the law, and immersed in sufferings, the penalty of it, and made a curse, the law is fulfilled, the curse and wrath of God removed, the sinner can look upon it with pleasure and obey it with delight: or whether these may be thought to represent the afflictions of God's people, comparable to water for their multitude, and for their overflowing and overwhelming nature, and to bitter ones, being grievous to the flesh; especially when God hides his face and they are thought to be in wrath: but these are sweetened through the presence of Christ, the shedding abroad of his love in the heart, the gracious promises he makes and applies, and especially through his bitter sufferings and death, and the fruits and effects thereof, which support, refresh, and cheer, see Heb 12:2, there he made a statute and an ordinance: not that he gave them at this time any particular law or precept, whether moral or ceremonial, such as the laws of keeping the sabbath and honouring of parents, which the Targum of Jonathan mentions {p}; and to which Jarchi adds that concerning the red heifer: but he gave them a general instruction and order concerning their future behaviour; that if they hearkened to his commandments, and yielded obedience to them, it would be well with them, if not they must expect to be chastised and afflicted by him, as is observed in the following verse, to which this refers: and there he proved them; the people of Israel; by these waters being first bitter and then sweetened, whereby he gave them a proof and specimen how it would be with them hereafter; that if they behaved ill they must expect the bitter waters of affliction, but, if otherwise, pleasant and good things: or, "there he proved him" {q}; Moses, his obedience and faith, by ordering him to cast in the tree he showed him; but the former sense seems best to agree with what follows. {l} Heb. Hist l. 6. c. 38. p. 742. {m} Ir. David, p. 21. {n} Fol. 51. 3. {o} In Methurgeman, fol. 9. 2. {p} So T. Bab. Sanhedrin. fol. 56. 2. Seder Olam Rabba, c. 5. p. 17. {q} whon "tentavit eum", Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius, V. L. Tigurine version; "prebavit eum", Vatablus; "tentavit ipsum", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. Exodus 15:26 Ver. 26. And said, if thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God,.... By this and the following words, they are prepared to expect a body of laws to be given unto them, as the rule of their future conduct; and though they were delivered

from the rigorous laws, bondage, and oppression of the Egyptians, yet they were not to be without law to God, their King, Lord, and Governor, whose voice they were to hearken to in all things he should direct them in:and wilt do that which is right in his sight; which he shall see and order as fit to be done, and which was not to be disputed and contradicted by them:and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes; whether moral, ceremonial, or judicial, even all that either had been made known to them, or should be hereafter enjoined them; and this at Mount Sinai, where they received a body of laws, they promised to do; namely, both to hear and to obey, Ex 24:3.I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; in any of the plagues inflicted on them, which they were witnesses of; from these they should be preserved, if obedient, but if not they must expect them, or what was similar to them, see De 28:27,for I am the Lord that healeth thee; both in body and soul; in body, by preserving from diseases, and by curing them when afflicted with them; and in soul, by pardoning their iniquities, which, in Scripture, is sometimes signified by healing, see Ps 103:3. Exodus 15:27Ver. 27. And they came to Elim,... On the twenty fifth of Nisan; for, according to Aben Ezra, they stayed but one day at Marah. Elim, as a late traveller {r} says, was upon the northern skirts of the desert of Sin, two leagues from Tor, and near thirty from Corondel; according to Bunting {s} it was eight miles from Marah:where were twelve wells of water, and seventy palm trees; and so a very convenient, commodious, and comfortable place to abide at for a time, since here was plenty of water for themselves and cattle, and shady trees to sit under by turns; for as for the fruit of them, that was not ripe at this time of the year, as Aben Ezra observes. Thevenot {t} seems to confound the waters here with the waters of Marah; for he says, the garden of the monks of Tor is the place which in holy Scripture is called Elim, where were sventy palm trees and twelve wells of bitter water; these wells, adds he, are still in being, being near one another, and most of them within the precinct of the garden, the rest are pretty near; they are all hot, and are returned again to their first bitterness; for I tasted says he, of one of them, where people bathe themselves, which by the Arabs is called Hammam Mouse, i.e. the "bath of Moses"; it is in a little dark cave: there is nothing in that garden but abundance of palm trees, which yield some rent to the monks, but the seventy old palm trees are not there now. This does not agree with an observation of the afore mentioned Jewish writer, that palm trees will not flourish in the ground where the waters are bitter; though they delight in watery places, as Pliny {u} says; and yet Leo Africanus {w} asserts, that in Numidia the dates (the fruit of palm trees) are best in a time of drought. A later traveller {x} tells us, he saw no more than nine of the twelve wells that are mentioned by Moses, the other three being filled up by those drifts of sand which are common in Arabia; yet this loss is amply made up by the great increase in the palm trees, the seventy having propagated themselves into more than 2000; under the shade of these trees is the Hammam Mouse, or "bath of Moses", particularly so called, which the inhabitants of Tor have in great veneration, acquainting us that it was here

where the household of Moses was encamped. Dr. Pocock takes Elim to be the same with Corondel; about four hours or ten miles south of Marah, he says, is the winter torrent of Corondel in a very narrow valley, full of tamarisk trees, where there is tolerable water about half a mile west of the road; beyond this, he says, about half an hour, or little more than a mile, is a winter torrent called Dieh-Salmeh; and about an hour or two further, i.e. about three or four miles, is the valley or torrent of Wousset, where there are several springs of water that are a little salt; and he thinks that one of them, but rather Corondel, is Elim, because it is said afterwards, they removed from Elim, and encamped at the Red sea; and the way to Corondel, to go to the valley of Baharum, is part of it near the sea, where he was informed there was good water, and so probably the Israelites encamped there; and Dr. Clayton {y} is of the same mind, induced by the argument he uses: a certain traveller {z}, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, tells us, that indeed the wells remain unto this day, but that there is not one palm tree, only some few low shrubs; but he could never have been at the right place, or must say a falsehood, since later travellers, who are to be depended upon, say the reverse, as the above quotations show. As to the mystical application of this passage, the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem make the twelve fountains answerable to the twelve tribes of Israel, and seventy palm trees to the seventy elders of the sanhedrim; and so Jarchi: and more evangelically the twelve fountains of water may denote the abundance of grace in Christ, in whom are the wells of salvation, and the sufficiency of it for all his people; and which the doctrine of the Gospel, delivered by his twelve apostles, discovers and reveals, and leads and directs souls unto; and the seventy palm trees may lead us to think of the seventy disciples sent out by Christ, and all other ministers of the word, who for their uprightness, fruitfulness, and usefulness, may be compared to palm trees, as good men in Scripture are, see Ps 92:12, and they encamped there by the waters; where they stayed, as Aben Ezra thinks, twenty days, since, in the first verse of the following chapter, they are said to come to the wilderness of Sin on the fifteenth day of the second month; here being everything agreeable to them for the refreshment of themselves and cattle, they pitched their tents and abode a while; as it is right in a spiritual sense for the people of God to abide by his word and ordinances. {r} Shaw, ut supra. (Travels, p. 314.) {s} Travels, p. 82. {t} Travels into the Levant, B. 2. ch. 26. p. 166. {u} Nat. Hist. l. 13. c. 4. {w} Descriptio Africae, l. 1. p. 82. {x} Dr. Shaw, ut supra. ({r}) {y} Chronolgy of the Hebrew Bible, p. 296, 297. {z} Baumgarten. Peregrinatio, l. 1. c. 21. p. 44.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 16:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 16

This chapter begins with an account of the journeying of the children of Israel from Elim to the wilderness of Sin, where they murmured for want of bread, [Ex 16:1](#), when the Lord told Moses that he would rain bread from heaven for them, which Moses informed them of; and withal, that the Lord took notice of their murmurings, [Ex 16:4](#) which promise the Lord fulfilled; and a description of the bread, and the name of it, are given, [Ex 16:13](#), and some instructions are delivered out concerning the quantity of it to be gathered, [Ex 16:16](#), the time of gathering and keeping it, [Ex 16:19](#), the gathering a double quantity on the sixth day for that and the seventh day, with the reason of it, [Ex 16:22](#) and a further description of it, [Ex 16:31](#), and an order to preserve an omer of it in a pot, to be kept for generations to come, that it might be seen by them, [Ex 16:32](#), and the chapter is concluded with observing, that this bread was ate by the Israelites forty years, even till they came to the borders of the land of Canaan, and the quantity they ate every day is observed what it was, [Ex 16:35](#).

Ver. 1. **And they took their journey from Elim**,.... And came again to the Red sea, as appears from [Nu 33:10](#) perhaps to some bay or creek of it, which ran up from it, and lay in their way, and where for a short time they encamped to look at it, and recollect what had been done for them in bringing them through it; but as their stay here was short, and nothing of any importance or consequence happened, it is here omitted, and their next station is only observed:

and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which still bears the same name, as a late traveller {a} informs us, who passed through it, and says, we traversed these plains in nine hours, being all the way diverted with the sight of a variety of lizards and vipers, that are here in great numbers; and elsewhere {b} he says, that vipers, especially in the wilderness of Sin which might very properly be called "the inheritance of dragons", were very dangerous and troublesome, not only our camels, but the Arabs who attended them, running every moment the risk of being bitten. The Red sea, or the bay of it, they came to from Elim, according to Bunting {c} was six miles, and from thence to the wilderness of Sin, sixteen more. This is a different wilderness from that of Zin, which is written with a different letter, [Nu 20:1](#) and was on the other side of Mount Sinai, as this was the way to it, as follows:

which is between Elim and Sinai according to the above writer {d}, it was twenty miles from Elim the Israelites travelled, and forty more ere they came to Sinai. Dr. Shaw {e} says, after traversing the plains in nine hours, we were near twelve hours in passing the many windings and difficult ways which lie beteen those deserts and these of Sinai; the latter consists of a beautiful plain more than a league in breadth, and nearly three in length:

on the fifteenth day of the second month, after their departing out of the land of Egypt; the month Ijar, as the Targum of Jonathan, which answers to part of April and part of May, and has its name from the beauty of the flowers, which appear at this time of the year: the Israelites were now come from thence a month or thirty days; for they came out the fifteenth of Abib or Nisan, and now it was the fifteenth of Ijar; and as the first day of this month, as Jarchi says, was on the first day of the week, this day must be so likewise; and yet sometimes the Jews say {f} this was a sabbath day.

{a} Shaw, p. 314. {b} lb p. 444. {c} Travels, p. 82. {d} Ib. {e} Travels, p. 314. {f} T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 87. 2.

Exodus 16:2

Ver. 2. **And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured**,.... For want of bread; for the Targum of Jonathan says, that day the dough ceased they brought of Egypt, on which, and the unleavened cakes they had lived thirty days; and for a longer space of time it was not sufficient, as Josephus {g} and other Jewish writers {h} observe; and now it was all spent, and they were in the utmost distress for bread, and fall a murmuring as they were used to do, when in any distress, even the whole congregation of them, at least the far greater part; some few might be excepted, as Caleb and Joshua, and some others: and they

murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness; in the wilderness of Sin, where they were, and where no corn was to be had to make bread of; and their murmuring was not only against Moses, as before when they wanted water, but against Aaron also, who were jointly concerned in bringing them out of Egypt. It is a common case, when things do not go so well as to be wished for in church or state, for people to murmur against their governors, ecclesiastic or civil, and lay all the blame to them.

{g} Antiqu. 1. 2. c. 15. sect. 1. {h} Seder Olam Rabba, c. 5. p. 17.

Exodus 16:3

Ver. 3. **And the children of Israel said unto them,**.... They not only inwardly murmured, and privately complained among themselves, but they spoke out their complaints, and that in a very extravagant manner:

would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt; by one of the plagues, or some such like plague as were inflicted on the Egyptians, which killed many of them, and particularly the hailstorm and plague on the firstborn; suggesting that death, even by the hand of the Lord, whether in an ordinary or extraordinary way, was more eligible than their present circumstances: when we sat by the fleshpots, and when we did eat bread to the full; which is an exaggeration of their former circumstances, and the happiness of them, in order to aggravate the misery of their present ones; for it can hardly be thought strictly true, that while they were in hard bondage in Egypt, they had often flesh in their pots, and leisure time to sit and attend them, either the boiling of it in them, or the eating of it when served up in dishes at the table; which they seem to boast of, as if they had several dishes of meat at table, and sat in great splendour, and took a great deal of time to regale themselves, and when they indulged themselves to satiety, having fulness of bread and all provisions:

for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger: but there was no danger of that at present, since they had so many flocks and herds with them; though indeed so large a number would soon have ate them up, and which could not so comfortably be fed upon without bread; and, besides, these they did not choose to slay, unless under great necessity, which they reserved for sacrifice, and for an increase.

Exodus 16:4

Ver. 4. **Then said the Lord unto Moses,**.... Who no doubt had been praying to him, as was his usual manner, when the people were in distress and complained, and was heard and answered by him: behold,

I will rain bread from heaven for you; though they were a murmuring, rebellious, and ungrateful people, the Lord dealt kindly and bountifully with them; he did not rain fire and brimstone upon them, as on Sodom and Gomorrah, nor snares and an horrible tempest, as on the wicked; but what was desirable by them, and suitable to their present circumstances, even bread, which was what they wanted, and this ready prepared; for though they did dress it in different ways, yet it might be eaten without any preparation at all; and this it was promised should be rained down upon them, there should be great plenty of it; it should come as thick and as fast as a shower of

rain, and lie around their camp ready at hand to take up; and this should not spring out of the earth as bread corn does, but come down from heaven; and being such a wonderful thing, a "behold" is prefixed unto it, denoting the marvellousness of it, as well as exciting attention to what was said: our Lord may seem to contradict this, when he says, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven, [Joh 6:32](#), but the reconciliation is easy; for not to observe that it was God, and not Moses, that gave this bread, so though it came from the airy heavens, and along with the dew of it, where it was prepared perhaps by the ministry of angels, and therefore called the corn of heaven, and angels' bread, [Ps 78:24](#), yet it came not from the heaven of heavens, the third heaven, from whence the true bread, the antitype of this, came, even our Lord Jesus Christ himself:

and the people shall go out, and gather a certain rate of it every day; or "the thing of the day in its day" {i}, the bread day by day; to which our Lord may be thought to allude, when he directs his disciples to pray, give us this day our daily bread; as this would be rained every morning, the people were to go out of the camp, and gather it up for their daily use, and which was to be done every day:

that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law or no; by this single instance of their obedience to his will in going out every morning to gather their bread, that should be rained for them, he proposed to try and prove their obedience to his law in all other respects; what regard would be had to it when it should be given, and what might be expected from them, and likewise whether they would depend upon his providence in this case also.

{i} wmwyb Mwy rbd "rem diei in die suo", Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Vatablus, Fagius, Drusius.

[Exodus 16:5](#)

Ver. 5. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day,.... Of the week, and from the raining of the bread, which was on the first day of the week:

they shall prepare that which they bring in; the Targum of Jonathan adds, to eat on the sabbath day; what they did not consume on the sixth day was to be prepared and reserved for the seventh day; that is, it was to be baked or boiled as they thought fit to have it, or eat it as it was, which they pleased, see [Ex 16:23](#) only one part of it was to be kept till the next day:

and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily: on that day should be rained double

what fell on other days, and so twice as much should be gathered up; the reason for which is not here mentioned, but afterwards given; though Moses no doubt was now made acquainted with it, or otherwise he could not have informed the princes and people of it, as he afterwards did, [Ex 16:23](#).

[Exodus 16:6](#)

Ver. 6. **And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel,**.... That is, Aaron spoke in the name of Moses to them, he being his spokesman, appointed of God to speak for him, and both spoke to them as from the Lord:

at even, then ye shall know that the Lord hath brought you out from the land of Egypt: that they were brought out they knew, but they make this to be an act and deed of Moses and Aaron, [Ex 16:3](#) whereas it was the work of the Lord; and at evening they should have a fresh proof of it, and that they were not brought forth to be killed with hunger, as they complained, by the quails coming up and covering their camp, whereby they would have flesh to eat, [Ex 16:12](#).

[Exodus 16:7](#)

Ver. 7. **And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the Lord,**.... Either as displayed in this wonderful affair, raining bread about their tents, which was in the morning, or else as it appeared in the cloud, [Ex 16:7](#) the latter sense seems to be confirmed by what follows: for that he; the glory of the Lord, the glorious Shechinah of Jehovah, the Angel that went before them in the cloud, the eternal Word and Son of God: heareth your murmurings against the Lord; against Jehovah his Father; see [Ge 19:24](#)

and what are we, that ye murmur against us? either signifying that there was no reason for it, and no occasion of it, since not they, but the Lord, brought them out of Egypt, and into those circumstances; what they did was only by his command, and with a view for their good, and therefore it was both unreasonable and ungrateful in them to murmur against them; or as observing, that seeing they murmured against the Lord, it was no strange thing to them they should murmur against them, and therefore took it the more quietly and patiently.

[Exodus 16:8](#)

Ver. 8. **And Moses said, this shall be,**.... Which supplement may be left out:

when the Lord shall give you in the evening flesh to eat; cause the quails to come up, and fall about their tents:

and in the morning bread to the full; by raining it from heaven all around them:

for that, or rather "then" {k},

the Lord heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him; it will then appear that he has heard them, and taken notice of them, by giving them bread and flesh, they complained of the want of; and yet did not resent in a way of wrath and displeasure their murmurings, but kindly, bountifully, and in a most marvellous manner provided for them, which was acting like himself, a God gracious and merciful:

and what [are] we? that we should be the objects of your resentment, and be murmured at, and complained of, who had done nothing to deserve such treatment:

your murmurings are not against us, but against the Lord; not only against them, but against the Lord also; or not so much against them as against the Lord, whose messengers and ministers they were, and whom they represented, obeyed, and served; thus whatever is done to the ministers of Christ, he reckons as done to the Father, and to himself,

[Lu 10:16](#).

{k} emvb "testabitur se audisse", Tigurine version.

[Exodus 16:9](#)

Ver. 9. **And Moses spake unto Aaron,**.... Who was his prophet and spokesman to the people:

say unto all the congregation of the children of Israel; to the heads of them, to as many as could conveniently hear him, and were to report what he said to the rest:

come near before the Lord; who was in the pillar of cloud, which from the first appearance of it never removed from them, nor the Lord from that; though some have thought, that before the tabernacle was built, there was some small tent or little tabernacle where the Shechinah was; but for this there is no foundation, there is for the other suggested:

for he hath heard your murmurings; which is repeated again and again, to observe to them the evil of it, and what notice the Lord took of it, though he indulged them in so gracious a manner he did.

Exodus 16:10

Ver. 10. And it came to pass, as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the children of Israel,.... Before he had well done speaking:

that they looked toward the wilderness; they were already in the wilderness of Sin, and they looked straight forward toward that part of it which was yet before them, or to the wilderness of Sinai, which was right onward, and whither they were travelling:

and, behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud; which went before them; there was a more than common brightness in it, an effulgence and beam of light and glory shining in it. Christ, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, appeared in it, in some visible displays of his majesty, which made it very observable to them.

Exodus 16:11

Ver. 11. And the Lord spake unto Moses,.... Out of the bright and glorious cloud:

saying; as follows:

Exodus 16:12

Ver. 12. I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel,.... This Moses and Aaron had often affirmed, and now the Lord confirms what they had said, and lets them know that he took notice of their murmurings, and disapproved of them, and was displeased with them; though he did not think fit to resent them in an angry way, but dealt kindly and graciously with them; and since he had brought them into a wilderness, which was his own act, he would take care of them, and provide for them; which they might reasonably conclude he would, since he had done so many great and good things for them, in bringing them out of Egypt, and through the Red sea, and had slain all their enemies, and had given them water when in distress, and therefore need not have murmured nor have doubted but that he would give them bread also:

speaking unto them, saying, at even ye shall eat flesh; meaning that very evening, when the quails came up, as the following verse shows:

and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; the next morning, when the manna fell around their camp, so that they had bread, and fulness of it:

and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God; good and gracious, kind and merciful, ever mindful of his covenant and promises, able to supply their wants, and provide them with everything necessary and sufficient for them.

Exodus 16:13

Ver. 13. And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up,.... From the coasts of Egypt, from the Red sea, over which they flew; and being evening, and weary with flying so long, lighted and settled where the Israelites encamped. Josephus {1} says, about the Arabian gulf there are more of this sort of birds than any other, which flying over the sea, and being weary, and coming nearer the ground than other birds, and lighting among the Hebrews, they took them with their hands as food prepared for them of God. The Targum of Jonathan calls them pheasants; some think they were locusts; but of this

See Gill on "Nu 11:31". These here seem to have come up one evening only, whereas, in the place referred to, they had them a whole month together:

and covered the camp: their numbers were so many, as indeed such a prodigious company of people as those were required a great number to satisfy them with. These quails, which were sent in the evening, at the close of the day, were an emblem of worldly things, which are not the portion of the saints and people of God, what they are to live upon, and take up their satisfaction in; nor are they abiding, but transitory things, which come and go, make themselves wings and fly away toward heaven: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host; the camp of Israel; or a lay of dew {m}, an emblem of the grace of God, and the blessings of it, see Ho 14:6. {1} Antiqu. l. 3. c. 1. sect. 5. {m} ljh tbkv "cubatio roris", Montanus, Piscator, Cartwright; "accubitus roris", Drusius; "situs [vel] stramentum roris", Munster. Exodus 16:14 Ver. 14. And when the dew that lay was gone up,.... Exhaled by the sun upon the rising of it: behold, upon the face of the wilderness; upon the surface of it, all around the camp of Israel: there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground; which is what is in the next verse called "manna". Before the sun rose there was nothing but a dew to be seen; when that was gone off through the force of the sun, then the manna appeared; which was but a "small thing", and very unpromising for food, and

especially for such a vast number of people; and a "round" thing, for which it is after compared to a coriander seed, as is thought; though the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan do not interpret the word of the round form, but rather refer to its smallness; and which is expressed in the Vulgate Latin version, "small, and as if beat with a pestle;" and for its white colour, as well as its smallness, it looked like hoar frost on the ground. Jarchi says there were two dews, within which it lay as something covered in a box, and he seems to be right; for it is certain from Nu 11:9, that there was a dew which fell first, and then the manna fell upon it; and from hence it is plain also, that there was a dew over the manna, which went up from it when the sun rose: and the design of this seems to be to keep this heavenly bread pure and clean for the Israelites, that it might neither partake of the dust nor sand of the wilderness where it fell, and that nothing might light upon it until the time of gathering it came. The Jews, in memory of this, will sometimes put bread upon the table between two table cloths {n}; and it is highly probable, that to this the allusion is of the "hidden manna" in Re 2:17, by which is meant our Lord Jesus Christ, the antitype of this manna, as will be observed as we pass on, in all the circumstances of it; the manna came with the dew, and was covered with it, and hid in it; Christ is the gift of God's free grace to the sons of men, and is exhibited in the word of grace, where he lies hid to men in the glory of his person and the fulness of his grace, until revealed and made known. The figure of the manna being "round", which is a perfect figure, may denote the perfection of Christ in his person, natures, and office; he being perfectly God and perfectly man, having all the essential perfections both of the divine and human natures in him, as well as all fulness of grace; and being made perfect through sufferings, is become a complete Saviour, and by his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, has perfected for ever his sanctified ones: and the manna being "small", may signify the meanness of Christ in the eyes of men in his state of humiliation, and the unpromising appearance he made of being the Saviour and King of Israel; the white colour of it may direct to the purity of Christ, to the holiness of his natures, and the beauty of his person, being white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousands. {n} Vid. Fagium in loc. Exodus 16:15 Ver. 15. And when the children of Israel saw it,.... As they could not but observe it, it being spread over the face of the wilderness; and besides, as they were told, that in the morning they should have bread to the full, they were up early to look after it: they said one to another, it [is] manna; not such as is known by that name now, which is only used in medicine; nor anything that was then known by any such name; but so they called it, because it was, as Jarchi says, a preparation of food, or food ready prepared for them, from hnm, "manah", which signifies to appoint, prepare, and distribute, see Da 1:5, so Christ is appointed of God, and prepared in his purposes and decrees, and delivered out, by his grace as proper food for his people, who have everyone their portion in due season: for Kimchi and Ben Melech give the sense of the word, a gift and portion from God; and such is Christ, the gift of his grace, and an unspeakable one. Some think these words were spoken by the Israelites on first sight

of the manna, by way of question, "Man hu, what is it?" and so Josephus {o} says it signifies in their language; but it does not appear that the word is so used in the Hebrew tongue, though it might in the Syriac or Chaldee, which was more in use in the times of Josephus. But it can hardly be thought that the Israelites could speak in either of these dialects at this time; it is much more probable what others say, that it so signifies in the Egyptian tongue; and it is not at all to be wondered at that Israel, just come out of Egypt, should use an Egyptian word: and this best agrees with the reason that follows, "for they wist not what it was"; which contradicts our version; for if they knew not what it was, how came they to call it manna? but taking the above words as an interrogation, asking one another what it was, those come in very pertinently, and assign a reason of the question, because they were ignorant of it, having never seen any such thing before; and this sense is confirmed by what Moses says in the next clause, telling them what it was: and thus Christ is unknown to his own people, until he is revealed unto them; not by flesh and blood, by carnal reason or carnal men, but by the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; and he remains always unknown to natural men, though ever so wise and prudent: and Moses said unto them, this is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat; which he had promised them the day before, and which he had now rained in plenty about them; and which they had as a free gift of his, without any merit and desert of theirs, and without their labour, diligence, and industry, and which they had now power from him to eat of freely and plentifully. {o} Antiqu. l. 3. c. 1. sect. 6. Exodus 16:16 Ver. 16. This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded,.... Respecting the gathering of it, the rule or rules he would have observed concerning that, as follows: gather of it every man according to his eating; according to his appetite, and according to the appetites of those that were in his family, as much as they can all eat; and that they may have enough, the particular quantity is fixed for each of them. This act of gathering, in the mystical sense, may respect the exercise of faith on Christ, laying hold of him as he is held forth in the word, receiving him, and feeding upon him with a spiritual appetite, and that freely, largely, plentifully, and encouraging others to do the same: an omer for every man; or head, or by poll {p}; they were to take the poll of their families, the number of them, and reckon to every head, or assign to every man, such a measure of the manna, and which was sufficient for a man of the keenest appetite; what this measure was, See Gill on "Ex 16:36" This must be understood not of sucking infants, and such that were sick and infirm, and of poor appetites, that could not feed upon and digest such sort of food, only of those that could: [according] to the number of your persons, take ye every man for them which are in his tent: this was to be done after it was gathered and brought in, either by certain overseers of this affair, or heads of families, who, according to the number of those that were in their tents, who were eaters of such sort of food, was to take an omer of it for everyone of them. {p} tl gl gl "ad caput", Montanus; "pro capite", Fagius, Drusius, Cartwright; so Ainsworth. Exodus 16:17 Ver. 17. And the children of Israel did so,.... They went out of the camp

in the morning when it was fallen, and gathered it; which is expressive of believers going out of the camp, leaving the world, and all behind them for Christ; and of their going out of themselves to him, and of their going in and out, and finding pasture and food for their souls in him to live upon: and gathered some more, some less; some that were more robust and strong, that were more active and diligent, gathered in more than others; which may denote the different degree and exercise of faith in God's people; some are strong in it, and others weak; some attain to a greater degree of knowledge of Christ, and receive more grace from him, and have more spiritual peace, joy, and comfort in believing, and others less; see Ro 15:1. Exodus 16:18 Ver. 18. And when they did mete it with an omer,.... What was gathered in; and everyone had his measure, his omer dealt out to him by those that meted or measured it: he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; when their gatherings were put together in one heap, and each had his omer measured out to him; he that had gathered more than an omer had no more allotted to him, and he that gathered not so much as an omer, yet had a full one measured out to him: or he, that is, Moses, "did not cause him to abound" {q}, that gathered much, he had no more for his share than another; nor "suffer" him "to want" {r} that gathered little, so that they all had alike; which shows, that though there may be different exercises of grace, yet it is the same grace in all; all have alike precious faith, and an equal interest in Christ, the object of it; all are equally redeemed by his precious blood, and justified by his righteousness, and have their sins forgiven on the foot of his atonement; all have the same Christ, and the same blessings of grace, and are entitled to the same eternal glory and happiness. The apostle quotes this passage, and applies it to that equality there should be among Christians in acts of beneficence and charity, that what is wanting in the one through poverty, may be made up by the riches of others, 2Co 8:14: they gathered every man according to his eating; according to the number of persons he had to eat of it; there always was, upon an average, some gathering more and others less, an omer gathered and distributed to every person. Jarchi takes this to be a miracle, that nothing should ever be wanting of an omer to a man; and so Aben Ezra observes, that the ancients say this is a miracle. {q} Pydeh "et non abundare fecit", Montanus. {r} ryoxh al "non minoravit", Montanus; "non defuit", Tigurine version. Exodus 16:19 Ver. 19. And Moses said unto them,.... At the same time he gave the direction to them about gathering it, and measuring out to every man an omer: let no man leave of it until the morning; not that every man was bound to eat up the quantity distributed to him; he might give what he could not eat to those that could eat more, if there were any such; or he might give it to his cattle, or cast it away, but he was not to reserve it until the next day for his use; which was to teach him that God would bestow this benefit and blessing on him daily, and he might expect it, whose mercies are new every morning; and to instruct him to live every day upon the providence of God for his daily food; as indeed every man ought to do so, let his circumstances be ever so affluent; and, in a more spiritual and evangelic sense, it teaches believers to live continually every day

by faith on Christ, and to say day by day, Lord, evermore give us this bread, Joh 6:34. Exodus 16:20 Ver. 20. Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses,.... That is, not all of them, some of them did, and perhaps the far greater part of them:but some of them left it until the morning; out of distrust, for fear they should have none the next day; being men of little faith, that could not trust God for a supply for the morrow; the Targum of Jonathan says, these were Dathan and Abiram; and so Jarchi:and it bred worms, and stank; or by an "hysteron proteron", and transposition of the words, the sense may be, that it stank, corrupted, and putrefied, and so produced worms, in which order the words lie, Ex 16:24, and this was not from the nature of the manna to breed worms so soon, but God so ordering and disposing it, that it should do so; for otherwise it would keep to another day, as what was gathered on the sixth day kept to the seventh, and there was a part of it kept for many ages, see Ex 16:24, and since the manna was of the meal kind, perhaps those worms it bred might be of the weevil sort, as Scheuchzer conjectures {s}:and Moses was wroth with them; for breaking the commandment of God. {s} Physica Sacra, vol. 2. p. 179. Exodus 16:21 Ver. 21. And they gathered it every morning,.... From the time the morning began, during four hours, or to the fourth hour, as the Targum of Jonathan; that is, till ten o'clock in the morning: this was a very wonderful thing that bread should be provided and rained every morning about the camp of Israel, in such plenty as to be sufficient to feed such a vast body of people; and that for forty years together:every man according to his eating; according to the number of persons he had in his family to eat of it, and as much as everyone could eat; there never was any lack or scarcity of it, but every morning there it was for them, and they gathered it, an omer for everyone:and when the sun waxed hot, it melted; and so what was left ungathered, being exhaled by the sun and laid up in the clouds, generated and increased, and became a provision to be let down the next morning; it being the will of God that it should not be trampled upon or exposed; and that the Israelites might be diligent, and not neglect the time of gathering it: and the Targum of Jonathan says, from the fourth hour, or ten o'clock and onward, the sun was hot upon it and melted it, which is the time of day when the sun is hottest: and some things, we may observe, are hardened by the sun, and others are softened, as the manna was, even to a liquefaction; though otherwise it was of so hard a nature as to be beaten in a mortar and ground in a mill, Nu 11:8. Exodus 16:22 Ver. 22. And it came to pass, that on the sixth day,.... Of the week, or from the first raining of the manna, which was the same:they gathered twice as much bread; as they had used to do on other days, a greater quantity falling, and which was more easily taken up:two omers for one man; or, "instead of one" {t} of one omer; so it turned out when they came to measure what they had gathered; otherwise they had no intention in gathering it, but lying in a great quantity, they gathered as much as they could, or could well carry, and upon measuring it so it proved; for it does not appear that Moses had as yet acquainted them what was to be, or would be gathered on this day; nor had he any orders so to do from the Lord, only he was told by him that so it would be, and

accordingly it came to pass, see Ex 16:5 and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses; what had happened, that the people that day had gathered as much more as they had used to do on other days: these seem to be the overseers of this affair, before whom what was gathered was brought, and in whose presence it was measured, and who took care that everyone should have his omer and no more: this makes it plain that the people acted without design, and knew not that they were to gather on this day double to other days; since the rulers knew nothing of it, nor of the reason of it, and it can hardly be imagined that the people should know and the rulers be ignorant. {t} dxal "pro uno", Tigurine version. Exodus 16:23 Ver. 23. And he said unto them, this is that which the Lord hath said,.... Which he had said to Moses privately, for as yet he had said it to none else: tomorrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord; according to Jarchi, the rulers asked Moses what this day was, different from other days, that double the quantity should be gathered? from whence, he says, we learn, that Moses had not as yet declared the sabbath to them; and this is indeed the first time we read of one; and though, as there was divine worship before, there must be times for it; but as there was as yet no certain place for worship, so no certain time for it, but as it was appointed by the heads of families, or as more families might agree unto and unite in; at least no day before this appears to be a day of rest from servile labour, as well as for holy use and service: bake that which ye will bake [today], and seethe that ye will seethe; the phrase "today" is not in the text, and not necessarily supplied; the sense being plainly this, that they might take and boil what they would, and dress as much of the manna as they pleased, and eat what they would, but not that they were to bake and boil for the next day; for it is clear, by what follows, that the manna of the next day was not dressed either way, for then it would be no wonder that it did not stink; and as yet the law for not kindling a fire on the sabbath day was not given; and therefore, for aught to the contrary, they might roast or seethe on that day, or eat it as it was, as they themselves thought fit: and that which remaineth over; what they did not bake, nor seethe, nor eat; lay up for you to be kept until the morning whereas on other days they were to leave nothing of it till the morning, but destroy it or cast it away, whatever was left uneaten. Exodus 16:24 Ver. 24. And they laid it up until the morning, as Moses bade,.... What was left of two omers a man, what they had neither baked nor boiled: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein, which was the case, when it was left or laid up on other days; and it showed that there was an interposition of divine Providence in the keeping of it to this day, and clearly confirmed it to be the will of God that this day should henceforward be to them the rest of the holy sabbath. Exodus 16:25 Ver. 25. And Moses said, eat that today,.... That is, he said this on the seventh day in the morning, and bid them eat of it whether baked or seethed, or as it was, or just as they pleased; however, they had liberty to eat of it, and indeed they had no other, because none fell on this day: for today is a sabbath unto the Lord; a time of rest from labour, and to be employed in the service of the Lord: today ye shall not find it in the field: should they

seek for it, which they had no occasion to do, since there was a sufficiency provided the day before; and this he said to prevent their going out to seek for it, which, if out of curiosity or for any other reason any of them should do, it would be in vain and fruitless. Exodus 16:26Ver. 26. Six days ye shall gather it,.... Day after day, every morning, as they had done the six days past, so they should during their stay in the wilderness:but on the seventh day, [which] is the sabbath; which is repeated, being a new thing, to impress it on their minds: in it there shall be none: no manna; none shall fall, and so none can be gathered, and therefore it would be to no purpose to go out and seek for it; as also there would be no need of it, since they would always have a double portion on the sixth day. Exodus 16:27Ver. 27. And it came to pass,.... Perhaps the next seventh day following:[that] there went out [some] of the people for to gather; to gather manna, as on other days; which they did not through want of provision or a greedy appetite, for they had bread every day, and on that day to the full, but to gratify their curiosity, or to see whether the words of Moses stood, as Aben Ezra expresses it, that is, whether what he said was true, or came to pass, that there should be none, and they should not be able to find any on that day, and so it was:and they found none; no manna; in the places where they used to find it in plenty on other days. Exodus 16:28Ver. 28. And the Lord said unto Moses,.... Who had seen and taken notice of what those men had done, who went out into the field to seek for manna on the seventh day, and was displeased with it, and therefore spoke to Moses out of the cloud:how long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? this is not said merely with respect to their breach of the commandment of the sabbath, as if they had long refused to observe and keep that; whereas that was but one command, and but just given; but upon their breach of that, he takes occasion to upbraid them with their former transgressions of other laws of his, and which they had continued in, or at least were frequently committing; and which was a proof of their perverseness and rebellion against him, though he was so kind and bountiful to them. Exodus 16:29Ver. 29. See, for that the Lord hath given you the sabbath,.... These are either the words of Jehovah, the Angel of the Lord, out of the cloud continued; or the words of Moses to the children of Israel, upon what the Lord had said to him, and would have them observe and take notice, that whereas the Lord had given them a sabbath, or enjoined them a day of rest:therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; wherefore they had no occasion to go out in search of manna, as well as it was a vain thing to do it; and especially as it was against a command of God, and being ungrateful in them, as there was such a provision made for them:abide ye every man in his place; in his tent for that day, giving himself up to religious exercises, to pray and praise, instruct his family, and in all things serve the Lord he was directed to:let no man go out of his place on the seventh day; not beyond two thousand cubits, as the Targum of Jonathan, which is the space the Jews generally fix upon for a man to walk on a sabbath day, so far he might go and no further; and which perhaps is the same space as is called a sabbath day's journey, See Gill on "Ac 1:12". Exodus 16:30Ver.

30. So the people rested on the seventh day. Did not attempt to go out of their tents in quest of manna, as on other days, and observed it as a day of rest from labour, and so they continued to do in successive generations. Exodus 16:31 Ver. 31. And the house of Israel called the name thereof manna,.... For till now they had given it no name; which shows that the words are not to be read as we render them in Ex 16:15 it is manna, unless this is to be considered as a confirmation of that name; but rather as an interrogation, "what is it?" though, from thence, "man" being the first word they made use of on sight of it, might so call it; or as others, from its being now an appointed, prepared, portion and gift, which they every day enjoyed, See Gill on "Ex 16:15", and it was like coriander seed, white that the colour of the manna was white is not only here asserted, but is plain from other passages, it being like the hoar frost, which is white, Ex 16:14 and its colour is the colour of bdellium, Nu 11:7 or pearl, which is of a white bright colour, as the word is interpreted by the Jews; and who say {u}, that the manna was round as a coriander seed, and white as a pearl; but then if it is here compared to the coriander seed on that account, some other seed than what we call coriander seed must be meant, since that is off darkish colour; though it is thought by most that the comparison with it is not on account of the colour, but its form being round, as a coriander seed is, and as the manna is said to be, Ex 16:14. Josephus {w} thinks it is compared to the coriander seed for its being about the size of that seed; though I must confess it seems to me to be compared to the coriander seed for its colour, and therefore "Gad", the word used, must signify something else than what we call coriander seed; but what that is, is not easy to say: Ben Gersom is of the same mind, and thinks it refers to colour, and fancies the "Gad" had his name from his whiteness, Ge 20:11. Artapanus {x}, the Heathen, makes mention of this food of the Jews in the wilderness, where, he says, they were thirty years; during which time God rained upon them meal like to panic (a sort of grain like millet), in colour almost as white as snow: and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey; or cakes that had honey mixed in them: though in Nu 11:8 the taste of it is said to be as the taste of fresh oil, which Saadiah Gaon, Aben Ezra, and others, account for thus; that if a man ate of it as it came down, it was as cakes of honey, but, when dressed, it was as the taste of fresh oil; however, it was very palatable and agreeable to the taste; honey that drops from palm trees is said to be not much different in taste from oil: the Jews {y} have a notion that there were all kinds of tastes in the manna, suited to the ages and appetites of persons, and that as they would have it, so it tasted; which notion the author of the book of Wisdom seems to give into, "Instead whereof thou feddest thine own people with angels' food, and didst send them from heaven bread prepared without their labour, able to content every man's delight, and agreeing to every taste. For thy sustenance declared thy sweetness unto thy children, and serving to the appetite of the eater, tempered itself to every man's liking." (Wisdom 16:20-21) Leo Africanus {z} speaks of a sort of manna found in great plenty in the deserts in Libya, which the inhabitants gather in vessels every morning to carry to market, and which

being mixed with water is drank for delight, and being put into broth has a very refreshing virtue: of the round form and white colour of manna, as applicable to Christ, notice has been taken on Ex 16:14 and the sweetness of its taste well agrees with him the antitype: his person is so to them who have tasted that the Lord is gracious; his word or Gospel is sweeter than the honey or the honeycomb; his mouth is most sweet, the doctrines that proceed from it, and the exceeding great and precious promises of it; his fruits and the blessings of his grace, peace, pardon, righteousness, &c. are sweet to those that sit under his shadow, where faith often feeds sweetly and with delight upon him, {u} T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 75. 1. {w} Antiqu. 1. 3. c. 1. sect. 6. {x} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. 1. 9. c. 27. p. 436. {y} Shemot Rabba, sect 25. fol. 108. 4. & Bemidar Rabba, sect. 7. fol. 188. {z} Descriptio Africae, l. 7. p. 631.

Exodus 16:32 Ver. 32. And Moses said,.... At another time, though it is here inserted to give the account of the manna all together: this is the thing which the Lord commandeth; namely, what follows: fill an omer of it to be kept for your generations; which was the quantity allowed a man every day; this measure was to be laid up, and reserved for posterity in future generations, not to eat, nor so much as taste of, for then it would soon have been gone, but to look at, as follows: that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt; that they might see what sort of food was provided for them, and what quantity each man had of it every day; and so have an ocular proof of the wisdom, power, and goodness of God, in providing for their support in a wilderness, where no supplies were to be had; and when they were just come out of an enemy's country: thus Christ is the food of his people, while they are in the wilderness of this world; and is never so until they are brought out of the state of nature's darkness and bondage, like that of the Egyptians; and who, being the food of the saints in ages past, is presented to the eye of faith, for its encouragement to look to him and believe in him, receive, embrace, and feed upon him. Exodus 16:33 Ver. 33. And Moses said unto Aaron, take a pot,.... The Targum of Jonathan calls it an earthen pot; and so Jarchi; which, if it could be supported, might be considered as an emblem of the ministers of the word, in whom, as in earthen vessels, the Gospel of Christ is put: Aben Ezra says, it was a vessel either of earth or brass, which latter is more likely for duration; since an earthen vessel can hardly be supposed to continue so long as this did, and much less a glass pot, as others take it to be: but the Septuagint version renders it a golden pot; and so it is said to be by Philo the Jew {a}, and which is confirmed by the apostle, Heb 9:4 and which puts the thing out of question; and this may denote the word and ordinances which retain and hold forth Christ as the bread of life, and are a memorial of him, as evidently set forth, crucified, and slain, to future ages, comparable to gold; both for the preciousness of them, being more to be desired than gold, yea, than fine gold, and for the duration of them, they being to continue until the second coming of Christ: and put an omer full of manna therein; the manna, and the full measure of it, according to a man's eating, was to be put into it, denoting that a full Christ, or Christ in all the

fulness of his person and grace, is to be held forth in the word and ordinances to the eye of faith: and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations; in a place where the Lord would hereafter fix the symbol of his presence, the ark, cherubim, and mercy seat; and may signify the presence of Christ with his Father, the efficacy of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, his mediation and intercession; for he is not only held forth in the word, for faith to look at, but he is before the throne as though he had been slain, Re 5:6. {a} De Cong. Quaer. Erud. Gratia, p. 438. Exodus 16:34 Ver. 34. As the Lord commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the testimony, to be kept. That is, before the ark of the testimony; when that was made, as it was in a little time after this, called the testimony, because it contained in it the law, which was a testimony or testification of the mind and will of God unto Israel, see Ex 25:16 the apostle says, the pot of manna was in the ark, Heb 9:4 that is, on one side of it, See Gill on "Heb 9:4". Exodus 16:35 Ver. 35. And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years,.... Wanting thirty days, as Jarchi observes; reckoning from their coming out of Egypt, and the passover they kept there, to their coming to the borders of the land of Canaan to Gilgal, and keeping the passover there, when the manna ceased, were just forty years; but then they had been out of Egypt a month before the manna fell; but the round number is given, as is common: it was on the sixteenth of Ijar, the second month, the manna fell; and it was in the month of Nisan, about the sixteenth or seventeenth of the month, that it ceased, see Jos 5:10 until they came to a land inhabited: where the ground was cultivated, and corn was produced to make bread of, which could not be had in a wilderness; and therefore God graciously provided for them every day, and fed them with manna till they came to such a place: they did eat manna until they came to the borders of the land of Canaan; that is, Gilgal: the Targum of Jonathan is, "they ate manna forty years in the life of Moses, until they came unto the land of habitation; they ate manna forty days after his death, until they passed over Jordan, and entered the extremities of the land of Canaan:" some have thought this verse was not written by Moses, but Joshua, or some other hand after his death since he did not live quite to the cessation of the manna; which need not be much disputed or objected to; though it may be considered that Moses led Israel to the borders of the land of Canaan, though he did not go with them so far as Gilgal, and died before the manna ceased; yet, as he was assured of it, he could write this in certain faith of it, and especially by a spirit of prophecy: this signifies that the children of God are to live by faith upon Christ, while they are in the wilderness of this world; nor will this spiritual food be wanting to them while in it; but when they are come to Canaan's land, to the heavenly glory, they will no more walk and live by faith, but by sight: the word and ordinances will then cease; Christ will be no more held forth to them in that way, but they shall see him as he is, and behold his glory, Exodus 16:36 Ver. 36. Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah. Frequent mention being made of this measure in the above relation, as containing the quantity of each man's share of the manna daily, during the forty years' stay in the wilderness; an account is

given by the historian how much it contained, by which it may appear what a sufficient provision was made: an ephah, according to Jarchi, contained three seahs (or pecks); a scab, six kabs; a kab, four logs; a log, six egg shells; and the tenth part of an ephah was forty three egg shells, and the fifth part of one: but Dr. Cumberland {b} has reduced this to our measure, and has given it more clearly and distinctly; an ephah, according to him, contained, in wine measure, seven gallons, two quarts, and about half a pint; in corn measure, six gallons, three pints, and three solid inches; and an omer three quarts; which being made into bread, must be more than any ordinary man could well eat; for, as Ainsworth observes, an omer was twice as much as the choenix, (a measure mentioned in Re 6:6.) which was wont to be a man's allowance of bread corn for a day; and what a vast quantity must fall every day to supply so large a number of people with such a measure; some have reckoned it at 94,466 bushels every day, and that there must be consumed in forty years 1,379,203,600 bushels {c}. {b} Of Scripture Weights and Measures, ch. 3. p. 64, 86, 87. ch. 4. p. 137. {c} Vid. Scheuchzer. Physic. Saer. vol. 2. p. 177, 178.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 17:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 17

The children of Israel coming to Rephidim, want water, and chide with Moses about it, who, crying to the Lord, is bid to smite the rock, from whence came water for them, and he named the place from their contention with him, [Ex 17:1](#) at this place Amalek came and fought with Israel, who, through the prayer of Moses, signified by the holding up of his hands, and by the sword of Joshua, was vanquished, [Ex 17:8](#), for the remembrance of which it was ordered to be recorded in a book, and an altar was built with this inscription on it, "Jehovahnissi": it being the will of God that Amalek should be fought with in every generation until utterly destroyed, [Ex 17:14](#).

Ver. 1. **And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin,....** Where they had stayed some time, at least a week, as it should seem, from the gathering the manna there six days, and resting on the seventh:

after their journeys: first from the wilderness of Sin to Dophkah, and from Dophkah to Alush, and from Alush to Rephidim, as appears from [Nu 33:12](#) their two stations at Dophkah and Alush are here omitted, nothing very remarkable or of any moment happening at either place:

according to the commandment; or "mouth of the Lord" {d}, who, either with an articulate voice out of the cloud, ordered when they should march, and where they should encamp; or else this was signified by the motion or rest of the pillar of cloud or fire, which always went before them, in which the Lord was:

and pitched in Rephidim; which was a place on the western side of Mount Sinai: according to Bunting {e}, Dophkah was twelve miles from the wilderness of Sin, and Alush twelve miles from Dophkah, and Rephidim eight miles from Alush: and Jerom says {f}, according to the propriety of the Syriac language, it signifies a remission of hands: and to which the Targum of Jonathan seems to have respect, adding,

"the place where their hands ceased from the precepts of the law, wherefore the fountains were dried up;"

and it follows:

and there was no water for the people to drink; being a sandy desert place.

{d} yp le "super ore", Montanus, "ad os", Vatablus. {e} Travels, p. 82. {f} Epist. ad Fabiolam de 42 mansion. tom. 3. fol. 15. B.

Exodus 17:2

Ver. 2. **Wherefore the people did chide with Moses**,.... Contended with him by words, expostulating with him in a very angry and indecent manner for bringing them thither; loading him with reproaches and calumnies, wrangling and quarrelling with him, and using him very ill, giving hard words and bad language:

and said, give us water, that we may drink; directing their speech both to Moses and Aaron, as the word "give" {g} being in the plural number shows; which was requiring that of them which only God could do and signifying as if they were under obligation to do it for them, since they had brought them out of Egypt, and had the care of them; and having seen so many miracles wrought by them, might conclude it was in their power to get them water when they pleased: had they desired them to pray to God for them, to give them water, and exercised faith on him, that he would provide for them, they had done well; which they might reasonably conclude he would, who had brought them out of Egypt, led them through the Red sea, had sweetened the waters at Marah for them, conducted them to fountains of water at Elim, and had rained flesh and bread about their tents in the wilderness of Sin, and still continued the manna with them:

and Moses said unto them, why chide ye with me? as if it was I that brought you hither, whereas it is the Lord that goes before you in the pillar of cloud and fire, and as if I kept water from you, or could give it you at pleasure; how unreasonable, as well as how ungenerous is it in you to chide with me on this account

wherefore do you tempt the Lord? the Lord Christ, as appears from [1Co 10:9](#) who with the Father and Spirit is the one Jehovah; him they tempted or tried; they tried whether he was present with them or not, [Ex 17:7](#), they tried his power, whether he could give them water in a dry and desert land; and they tried his patience by chiding with his servants, and showing so much distrust of his power and providence, of his goodness and faithfulness; and by their wretched ingratitude and rebellion they tempted him to work a miracle for them.

{g} wnt "Date", Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

Exodus 17:3

Ver. 3. **And the people thirsted there for water**,.... They saw there was no water when they first came thither, and therefore chid Moses for bringing them to such a place, where they could not subsist; and having stayed some little time here, and all the water they brought with them from Alush being spent, and having none to drink, began to be very thirsty:

and the people murmured against Moses; became more impatient and enraged, and threw out their invectives against him with much acrimony and severity:

wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt? where it would have been much better for us to have continued:

to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst: which is intolerable to any, and especially to children and cattle, which require frequent drinking: they could not suppose that Moses had such a murderous view in bringing them out of Egypt, or that this was his intention in it, but that this would be the issue and event of it.

Exodus 17:4

Ver. 4. **And Moses cried unto the Lord**..... Or prayed unto him, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan; which shows the distress he was thrown into, the vehemence of his prayer, and perhaps the loud and lamentable tone in which he expressed it: this was the method he always took, and the refuge he fled unto in all his times of trouble; in which he did well, and set a good example of piety and devotion to God, of faith and trust in him: saying,

what shall I do unto this people? or, "for this people" {h}; to relieve them in their present exigency; suggesting his own inability to do any thing for them: yet not despairing of relief, but rather expressing faith in the power and goodness of God to keep them, by his application to him; desiring that he would open a way for their help, and direct him what he must do in this case for them: something, he intimates, must be done speedily for the glory of God, for his own safety, and to prevent the people sinning yet more and more, and so bring destruction upon them; for, adds he,

they be almost ready to stone me or, "yet a little, and they will stone me" {i}; if the time of help is protracted, if relief is not in a short time given, he had reason to believe from the menaces they had given out, the impatience they had showed, the rage they were in, they would certainly take up stones and stone him, being in a stony and rocky

place; and this they would do, not as a formal punishment of him as a false prophet, telling them they should be brought to Canaan, when they were brought into the wilderness and perishing there; which law respecting such an one was not yet in being; but this he supposed as what an enraged multitude was wont to do, and which was more ready at hand for them to do than anything else, see [Ex 8:26](#).

{h} hzh Mel "populo haic", V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c. {i} jem dwe "adhuc paululum et lapidabit me." V. L. "parum abest", Tigurine version; "adhuc modicum", Pagninus, Montanus; "adhuc paulisper", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Ainsworth.

[Exodus 17:5](#)

Ver. 5. **And the Lord said unto Moses**,.... Out of the pillar of cloud:

go on before the people, lead them on nearer to Mount Sinai or Horeb, within sight of which they now were. Jarchi adds, by way of explanation, "and see if they will stone thee"; fear not, go on boldly, no harm shall come to thee:

and take with thee of the elders of Israel; some of them for a witness, as the above writer observes, that they may see that by thine hand water comes out of the rock, and may not say there were fountains there from the days of old. These were taken, because they were the principal men among the people, who, as they were men of years, so of prudence and probity, and whose veracity might be depended upon; and since so great a multitude could not all of them see the miracle, the rock being smote, and the water only flowing in one part of it, and perhaps the road to it but narrow, it was proper some persons should be singled out as witnesses of it, and who so proper as the elders of the people?

and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand and go; wherewith the river Nile was smitten, and the water became blood, when Moses and Aaron first went to Pharaoh; and which, though smitten by Aaron, yet being with the rod of Moses, and by his order, is attributed to him; or else with which the Red sea was smitten by Moses, and divided; which being but a narrow channel, or an arm of the sea, might be called a river: and this circumstance is observed, as the afore mentioned writer thinks, to let the Israelites know, that the rod was not, as they thought, only designed for inflicting punishment, as on Pharaoh and the Egyptians, but also for bringing good unto them; and when they saw this in his hand, by which so many miracles had been wrought, they might be encouraged to hope that something was going to be done in their favour, and that water would be produced for them to drink.

[Exodus 17:6](#)

Ver. 6. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb,.... Or "upon that rock" {k}, a particular rock which was pointed unto, where the Lord in the pillar of cloud would stand; not as a mere spectator of this affair, but as a director of Moses where to smite the rock; and to exert his power in producing water from it, and by his presence to encourage Moses to do it, and to expect and believe the issue of it:

and thou shalt smite the rock: or "on the rock", or "in it" {l}; which made Jarchi fancy that the rod of Moses was something very hard, that it was a sapphire by which the rock was cleft:

and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink, they, their children, and their cattle, ready to die for thirst. Thus God showed himself gracious and merciful to a murmuring and ungrateful people:

and Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel; he smote the rock with his rod, and the waters gushed out in great abundance, like streams and rivers, for the refreshment of the people, and their flocks, [Ps 78:20](#). The Heathens have preserved some footsteps of this miracle in their writings, though disguised. Pausanias {m} speaks of a fountain of cold water springing out of a rock, and reports how Atalantes, coming from hunting thirsty, smote a rock with his spear, and water flowed out. This rock at Rephidim, and the apertures through which the waters flowed, are to be seen to this day, as travellers of veracity relate. Monsieur Thevenot {n} says the rock at Rephidim is only a stone of a prodigious height and thickness, rising out of the ground: on the two sides of that stone we saw several holes, by which the water hath run, as may be easily known by the prints of the water, which hath much hollowed it, but at present no water issues out of them. A later traveller {o} gives us a more distinct account of it: after we had descended the western side of this Mount (Sinai), says he, we came into the plain or wilderness of Rephidim, where we saw that extraordinary antiquity, the rock of Meribah, which was continued to this day, without the least injury from time or accidents. This is rightly called, from its hardness, [De 8:15](#), vymlxh rwu, "a rock of flint", though, from the purple or reddish colour of it, it may be rather rendered the rock of Mlx or hmlxa, amethyst, or the amethystine, or granite rock. It is about six yards square, lying tottering as it were, and loose, near the middle of the valley, and seems to have been formerly a cliff of Mount Sinai, which hangs in a variety of precipices all over this plain; the water which gushed out, and the stream which flowed withal, [Ps 78:20](#) have hollowed across one corner of this rock, a channel about two inches deep, and twenty wide, all over incrustated like the inside of a tea kettle that has been long used. Besides several mossy productions that are still

preserved by the dew, we see all over this channel a great number of holes, some of them four or five inches deep, and one or two in diameter, the lively and demonstrative tokens of their having been formerly so many fountains. Neither could art nor chance be concerned in the contrivance, inasmuch as every circumstance points out to us a miracle; and, in the same manner with the rent in the rock of Mount Calvary at Jerusalem, never fails to produce the greatest seriousness and devotion in all who see it. The Arabs, who were our guards, were ready to stone me in attempting to break off a corner of it: and another late traveller {p} informs us, that the stone called the stone of the fountains, or the solitary rock, is about twelve feet high, and about eight or ten feet broad, though it is not all of one equal breadth. It is a granite marble, of a kind of brick colour, composed of red and white spots, which are both dusky in their kind; and it stands by itself in the fore mentioned valley (the valley of Rephidim) as if it had grown out of the earth, on the right hand of the road toward the northeast: there remains on it to this day the lively impression of the miracle then wrought; for there are still to be seen the places where the water gushed out, six openings towards the southwest, and six towards the northeast; and in those places where the water flowed the clefts are still to be seen in the rock, as it were with lips. The account Dr. Pocock {q} gives of it is this,

"it is on the foot of Mount Seriah, and is a red granite stone, fifteen feet long, ten wide, and about twelve high: on both sides of it toward the south end, and at the top of it for about the breadth of eight inches, it is discoloured as by the running of water; and all down this part, and both sides, and at top, are a sort of openings and mouths, some of which resemble the lion's mouth that is sometimes cut in stone spouts, but appear not to be the work of a tool. There are about twelve on each side, and within everyone is an horizontal crack, and in some also a crack down perpendicularly. There is also a crack from one of the mouths next to the hill, that extends two or three feet to the north, and all round to the south. The Arabs call this the stone of Moses; and other late travellers {r} say, that about a mile and a half, in the vale of Rephidim, is this rock; this, say they, is a vast stone, of a very compact and hard granite, and as it were projecting out of the ground; on both sides are twelve fissures, which the monk our guide applied to the twelve apostles, and possibly not amiss, had he joined the twelve tribes of Israel with them: as we were observing these fissures, out of which the water gushed, one would be tempted to think, added he, it is no longer ago than yesterday the water flowed out; and indeed there is such an appearance, that at a distance one would think it to be a small waterfall lately dried up: and one {s} that travelled hither in the beginning of the sixteenth century says, that to this day out of one of the marks or holes there sweats a sort of moisture, which we saw and licked."

We are taught by the Apostle Paul the mystical and spiritual meaning of this rock, which he says was Christ, that is, a type of him,

[1Co 10:4](#) as it was for his external unpromising appearance among men at his birth, in his life and death; for his height, being higher than the kings of the earth, than the angels of heaven, and than the heavens themselves, and for strength, firmness, and solidity. The water that flowed from this rock was typical of the grace of Christ, and the blessings of it, which flow from him in great abundance to the refreshment and comfort of his people, and to be had freely; and of the blood of Christ, which flowed from him when stricken and smitten. And the rock being smitten with the rod of Moses, typified Christ being smitten by the rod of the law in the hand of justice, for the transgressions of his people; and how that through his having being made sin, and a curse for them, whereby the law and justice of God are satisfied, the blessings of grace flow freely to them, and follow them all the days of their lives, as the waters of the rock followed the Israelites through the wilderness.

{k} rwuh le "super illam petram", Junius & Tremellius; "super illa petra", Piscator. {l} rwub "in petram", Pagninus, Montanus, "in petra seu rupe"; so Jarchi, and the Targums. {m} Laconic sive, l. 3. p. 209. {n} Travels into the Levant, par. 1. B. 2. ch. 26. p. 167. {o} Dr. Shaw's Travels, p. 317. Ed. 2. {p} Journal from Cairo to Mount Sinai, A. D. 1722, 35, 36, 37. Ed. 2. {q} Travels, p. 148. {r} Egmont and Heyman's Travels, vol. 2. p. 174, 175. {s} Baumgarten. Peregrinatio, l. 1. c. 24. p. 62.

[Exodus 17:7](#)

Ver. 7. **And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah,**.... The former signifies "temptation", and the latter "contention": the reason of which names being given by Moses, or whoever was the name of the place, follows: "because of the chiding of the children of Israel"; that was the reason why it was called by the last name, Meribah, because here, the Israelites chid and contended with Moses, and used him opprobriously:

and because they tempted the Lord; therefore it had the former name of Massah:

saying, is the Lord among us or not? as if they should say, if we perish through thirst, the Lord is not among us, nor takes any care of us; nor was it he that brought us out of Egypt, but Moses; nor is he in the pillar of cloud and fire, as is said; but if he works a miracle, and gives us water, for us, our children, and cattle, then it will appear he is among us; and thus they tempted the Lord, though without this they had full proof, by many instances, that he was among them, and even in a very extraordinary manner.

[Exodus 17:8](#)

Ver. 8. **Then came Amalek**,.... The Amalekites, who were not the posterity of Amalek, a son of Eliphaz, the son of Esau, by Timna the concubine of Eliphaz, [Ge 36:12](#) who dwelt in the desert, to the south of Judea, beyond the city Petra, as you go to Aila, as Jerom says {t}; and so the Targum of Jonathan describes them as coming from the south; and Aben Ezra interprets them a nation that inhabited the southern country. Josephus {u} calls them the inhabitants of Gobolitis and Petra; but they were the descendants of Cush, and the same with those who were in Abraham's time long before Amalek, the descendant of Esau, was in being, [Ge 14:7](#) and who bordered eastward on the wilderness of Shur:

and fought with Israel in Rephidim; so that this was before they came from hence to Sinai, very probably as they were on the march thither, and before the rock was smitten, and they had been refreshed with water, and so while they were in distress for want of that, and therefore this must be a great trial and exercise to them. What should move the Amalekites to come and fight with them, is not easy to say; it is by many thought to be the old grudge of the children of Esau against the children of Israel, because of the affair of the birthright and blessing which Jacob got from Esau, who were now on their march for the land of Canaan, which came to him thereby: but it is hardly probable that these people should know anything of those matters at this distance, and besides were not of the race of Esau; and if anything of this kind was in remembrance, and still subsisted, it is most likely that the Edomites would have been concerned to stop them, rather than these: it is more probable, that these had heard of their coming out, of Egypt with great riches, the spoils of the Egyptians; and being an unarmed, undisciplined people, though numerous, thought to have taken this advantage against them of their distress and contentious, and plundered them of their wealth; unless we can suppose them to be an ally of the Canaanites, and so bound by treaty to obstruct their passage to the land of Canaan: but be it as it may; they came out against them, and fought with them without any provocation, the Israelites not attempting to enter their country, but rather going from it; for these seem to follow them, to come upon the back of them, and fall upon their rear, as appears from [De 25:17](#).

{t} De locis Hebr. fol. 87. M. {u} Antiqu. 1. 3. c. 2. sect. 1.

[Exodus 17:9](#)

Ver. 9. **And Moses said unto Joshua**,.... The son of Nun, who was his minister, and was a man of war from his youth, trained up in the art of war, and afterwards succeeded Moses, and was captain of the armies of Israel, and fought at the head of

them, and subdued the Canaanites. Moses knew he was a fit person for the present purpose, and therefore gave him the following orders:

choose us out men; the stoutest and most courageous, best able to bear arms, and engage in war; for the multitude in common was not qualified for such service, nor was there any necessity of engaging them all in it:

and go out; out of the camp, and meet them at some distance, that the women and children might not be terrified with the enemy:

fight with Amalek; for their cause was just, Amalek was the aggressor, Israel was on the defensive part; and should it be asked where they had arms to fight with, it may be remembered that the Egyptian army that was drowned in the Red sea, and whose bodies were cast upon the shore, might furnish them with a large quantity of armour, which they stripped them of, and arrayed themselves with:

tomorrow I will stand upon the top of the hill, with the rod of God in my hand: on the top of Mount Horeb or Sinai, where he might be seen by the army of Israel with that rod in his hand, lifted up as a banner, by which God had done so many wonderful things; and by which they might be encouraged to hope that victory would go on their side, and this he promised to do "tomorrow", the day following; for sooner a select body of men could not be taken out from the people, and accoutred for war, and go forth to meet the enemy.

Exodus 17:10

Ver. 10. **So Joshua did as Moses had said to him,**.... He singled out some proper persons for the battle, and arrayed them with armour, and led them forth out of the camp, and went forth at the head of them:

and fought with Amalek; upon both armies meeting, a battle ensued:

and Moses, Aaron, and Hur, went up to the top of the hill; to the top of Mount Sinai or Horeb, not so much to see the battle fought, as to be seen by Joshua and the people of Israel, especially Moses with the rod in his hand lifted up, that they might behold it, and be encouraged through it to hope for and expect victory; and the other two went up with him to assist him in holding up his hands with the rod, as appears by what follows. Aaron, it is well known, was his brother, but who Hur was is not so clear, though no doubt a very eminent and principal man. There was an Hur, the son of Caleb, who descended from Judah in the line of Phares and Hezron, and which Hur

was the grandfather of Bezaleel [1Ch 2:5](#), but whether the same with this cannot be said with certainty; it is most likely that he was the husband of Miriam, as Josephus says {w}, and so the brother-in-law of Moses and Aaron; though some Jewish writers say {x} that he was their sister's son, the son of Miriam.

{w} Antiqu. 1. 3. c. 2. sect. 4. {x} Pirke Eliezer, c. 45. Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 7. 1.

[Exodus 17:11](#)

Ver. 11. **And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed,....** With his rod in it as a banner displayed, as some think, which inspired the Israelites with courage to fight, and they had the better of it; though Aben Ezra rejects that notion, observing, that if that had been the case, Aaron or Hur would have lifted it up, or fixed it in a high place on the mount, that it might have been seen standing; and therefore he thinks the sense of the ancients the most correct, that it was a prayer gesture. And among the Heathens, Moses was famous for the efficacy of his prayers; Numenius, the Pythagoric philosopher {y}, says of him, that he was a man very powerful in prayer with God: and so all the Targums interpret it, and particularly the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase the words,

"when Moses lift up his hands in prayer, the house of Israel prevailed, but when he restrained his hands from prayer, the house of Amalek prevailed,"

as it follows:

when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed; so that victory seemed to go sometimes on one side, and sometimes on the other, according as the hand of Moses, with the rod in it, was held up or let down; when it was held up, and Israel saw it, they fought valiantly, but when it was let down, and they could not see it, their hearts failed them, and they feared it portended ill to them, which caused them to give way to the enemy. The spiritual Israel of God are engaged in a warfare with spiritual enemies, some within, and some without; and sometimes they prevail over their enemies, and sometimes their enemies prevail over them for a while; and things go on very much as a man either keeps up or leaves off praying, which is signified by the lifting up of holy hands without wrath and doubting, [1Ti 2:8](#) and which when rightly performed, under the influence of the divine Spirit in faith, in sincerity, and with fervency and constancy, has great power with God and Christ, and against Satan and every spiritual enemy.

{y} Apud Euseb. Praepar, Evangel. 1. 9. c. 8. p. 411.

Exodus 17:12

Ver. 12. **But Moses's hands were heavy**,.... And hung down through weariness, holding up the rod first in one hand, and then in another, for so long a time; and thus sometimes, through infirmity, the best of men grow remiss in prayer, their hands are weak and hang down through the corruptions of their hearts, the power of unbelief, the temptations of Satan, and want of immediate answers of prayer, or through long delays of it, and then the enemy gets an advantage over them:

and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; so that it seems not only that his hands were heavy, but he could not well stand on his feet any longer, being a corpulent man as well as in years, as Ben Gersom suggests; and therefore Aaron and Hur took a stone that lay on the mount for him to sit upon, where he might be raised as high, and be as well seen, as standing: this stone may be an emblem of Christ the stone of Israel, the foundation of his people, their prop and support, which sustains and upholds them, their Ebenezer, or stone of help in all their times of difficulty and distress:

and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; the one was on his right, and the other on his left; and when the rod was in his right hand, he that was on that side held up that; and when it was in his left hand, he that was on the left side supported that: these may be an emblem of Christ, and of the Spirit of Christ, from whom the saints have their supports and assistance in prayer: Aaron the priest may represent Christ, from whose blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, and from whose advocacy, mediation, and intercession, the people of God receive much encouragement and strength in their addresses at the throne of grace: and Hur, who has his name from a word which signifies freedom and liberty, may be an emblem of the Holy Spirit of God; who helps the saints in prayer under all their infirmities, and makes intercession for them, by filling their hearts and mouths with arguments, and is a free spirit to them; by whom they are upheld, and where he is there is liberty, and a soul can come forth in prayer to God, and in the exercise of grace with freedom:

and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun; when the victory was decided in favour of Israel; this may denote steadiness of faith in prayer, the constant performance of it, and continuance in it as long as a man lives. Exodus 17:13 Ver. 13. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. Amalek being distinguished from "his people", has led some to think that Amalek was the name of the king, or general of the army, and that it was a common name to the kings

of that nation, as Pharaoh was to the kings of Egypt; but for this there is no foundation in the Scriptures: as Amelek signifies the Amalekites, his people may design the confederates and auxiliaries, the other people, as Ben Gersom expresses it, they brought with them to fight against Israel. And so Jerom {z} says, by him another Canaanite dwelt, who also fought against Israel in the wilderness, of whom it is so written, and Amalek and the Canaanite dwelt in the valley, Nu 14:25 and who were all, the one as the other, at least the greatest part of them, cut to pieces by the edge of the sword of Joshua and the Israelites, who obtained a complete victory over them; as the spiritual Israel of God will at last over all their spiritual enemies, sin, Satan, the world, and death. {z} Ut supra. (De Locis Hebr. fol. 87. M.) Exodus 17:14 Ver. 14. And the Lord said unto Moses,.... After the battle was over, and the Israelites had got the victory: write this for a memorial in a book: not in loose papers, but in a book, that it might continue; meaning that the account of this battle with Amelek should be put down in the annals or journal of Moses, in the book of the law he was writing, or was about to write, and would write, as he did, see Jos 1:7 that so it might be kept in memory, and transmitted to the latest posterity; it being on the one hand an instance of great impiety, inhumanity, and rashness, in Amalek, and on the other a display of the goodness, kindness, and power of God on the behalf of his people: and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua; who was a principal person concerned in this battle, and therefore, when the account was written and rehearsed, could bear witness to the truth of it, as well as he was to be the chief person that should be concerned in introducing the Israelites into the land of Canaan, and subduing the Canaanites; and therefore this, and what follows, was to be rehearsed to him, as the rule of his conduct toward them, and particularly Amalek: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amelek from under heaven; so that they shall be no more a nation, and their name never mentioned, unless with disgrace and contempt. This was fulfilled partly by Saul, 1Sa 15:8 and more completely by David, 1Sa 30:17, and the finishing stroke the Jews give to Mordecai and Esther, as the Targum of Jerusalem on Ex 17:6. Exodus 17:15 Ver. 15. And Moses built an altar,.... On Horeb, as Aben Ezra; on the top of the hill, as Ben Gersom, where sacrifices of thanksgiving were offered up for the victory obtained, or however a monument erected in memory of it: and he called the name of it Jehovahnissi; which signifies either "the Lord is my miracle" who wrought a miracle for them in giving them the victory over Amalek, as well as, through smiting the rock with the rod, brought out water from thence for the refreshment of the people, their children and cattle; or "the Lord is my banner": alluding to the hands of Moses being lifted up with the rod therein, as a banner displayed, under which Joshua and Israel fought, and got the victory. This may fitly be applied to Christ, who is both altar, sacrifice, and priest, and who is the true Jehovah, and after so called; and who is lifted up as a banner, standard, or ensign in the everlasting Gospel, in order to gather souls unto him, and enlist them under him, and to prepare them for war, and encourage them in it against their spiritual enemies; and as a token of their victory over them,

and a direction to them where they shall stand, when to march, and whom they shall follow; and to distinguish them from all other bands and companies, and for the protection of them from all their enemies, see Isa 11:10. These words were inscribed upon the altar, or the altar was called the altar of Jehovahnissi, in memory of what was here done; from hence it has been thought {a}, that Baachus, among the Heathens, had his name of Dionysius, as if it was Jehovahnysaeus. {a} Vid. Bochart. Canaan, l. 1. c. 18. col. 440. Exodus 17:16 Ver. 16. For he said, because the Lord hath sworn,.... So some Jewish writers {b} take it for an oath, as we do; or "because the hand is on the throne of the Lord" {c}; which the Targum of Jonathan, Jarchi, and Aben Ezra, interpret of the hand of the Lord being lifted up, of his swearing by the throne of his glory; but, as Drusius observes, it is not credible that God should swear by that which is prohibited by Christ, Mt 5:24 rather the words are to be rendered, "because the hand", that is, the hand of Amalek, "is against the throne of the Lord" {d}; against his people, among whom his throne was, and over whom he ruled, so against himself, and the glory of his majesty; because he was the first that made war upon Israel, when the Lord brought them out of Egypt, and unprovoked fell upon their rear, and smote the hindmost, faint and weary among them: therefore the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation; until they are utterly destroyed; and so in fact he had, and thus it was. The Targum of Jonathan is, "he by his word will make war against those that are of the house of Amalek, and destroy them to three generations, from the generation of this world, from the generation of the Messiah, and from the generation of the world to come;" and Baal Hatturim on the place observes, that this phrase, "from generation to generation", by gematry, signifies the days of the Messiah. Amalek may be considered as a type of antichrist, whose hand is against the throne of God, his tabernacle, and his saints; who, with all the antichristian states which make war with the Lamb, will be overcome and destroyed by him. {b} R. Sol. Urbin. fol. 95. 1. {c} hy-ok le dy yk "quia manus super thronum Domini", Pagninus, Montanus; "sublata manu super solium Dei (juro)", Tigurine version. {d} "Quia manus (Hamaleki) fuit contra solium Jah", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Ainsworth.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 18:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 18

This chapter gives an account of Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, with Zipporah his daughter, the wife of Moses, and her two sons, meeting him in the wilderness, who was kindly received by him, [Ex 18:1](#) and on Moses' relating the great things God had done for Israel, Jethro expressed his joy on that account, gave praise to God, offered sacrifice, and kept a feast with the elders of Israel, [Ex 18:8](#), and observing the constant and fatiguing business Moses had on his hands from morning to evening in judging the people, [Ex 18:13](#), he gave him advice to appoint persons under him to receive laws and ordinances from him, he should have from God, and, according to them, judge and govern the people under them, some being rulers of thousands, others of hundreds, others of fifties, and some of tens, [Ex 18:19](#), which counsel was acceptable to Moses, and he took it, [Ex 18:24](#) and the chapter is concluded with their friendly parting, [Ex 18:27](#).

Ver. 1. **When Jethro the priest of Midian, Moses's father-in-law,**.... The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan call him the prince of Midian, and so the word {e} is rendered in some versions; whose daughter Moses had married, and so was his father-in-law, of which see more in [Ex 2:16](#).

heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel his people; the miracles he had wrought for them in Egypt, the dividing of the Red sea to make a way for them, the destruction of the Egyptians, providing them with bread and water in such a miraculous manner in the wilderness, and giving them victory over Amalek, and appearing always at the head of them in a pillar of cloud and fire:

[and] that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt: which was the greatest blessing of all, and for the sake of which so many wonderful things had been done to Pharaoh and the Egyptians. And now Midian being near to Egypt, it is not to be wondered at that Jethro should hear of these things, the fame of which went through all the countries round about, see [Ex 15:14](#), though it is not improbable that Moses might send messengers to Midian to acquaint his father-in-law, his wife, and sons, of what the Lord had done for him, and by him.

{e} zhk "praeses", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

Exodus 18:2

Ver. 2. Then Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses's wife,.... When he had heard of the above things, he determined to pay Moses a visit, and congratulate him on that account; and he took his daughter, the wife of Moses, along with him, to deliver her to her husband, to share with him in his cares and troubles; as to partake with him of his honours and dignity, so to bear part with him in his burdens, so far as she was capable of:

after he had sent her back: upon his call and mission to Egypt, he took his wife and children with him; but upon an affair which occurred in the inn by the way, he sent them back again to his father-in-law, where they had remained ever since, see [Ex 4:24](#). Jarchi says this was done at meeting with Aaron his brother, [Ex 4:27](#), and relates a conversation between them upon it. As that Aaron should say to him, who are these? to which he replied, this is my wife, I married her in Midian, and these are my sons: he further said to him, and where art thou carrying them? he replied, to Egypt; says he, by reason of those who are before there, we are in straits, and thou wilt add unto them; upon which he said to his wife, go back to thy father's house, and she took her sons and went thither. Kimchi {f} observes, that some render the words "after her gifts"; whose sense, according to Aben Ezra, is, after she had sent gifts to her husband; but others more probably interpret it of gifts sent by him to her to engage his father-in-law to let her come to him, as well as to prevail upon her to come; perhaps it may be better rendered, "after her messenger"; that is, either after the messenger sent to her by Moses, to acquaint her and her father of what had been done for him, or after the messenger she sent to him, to let him know that she intended shortly to be with him; though perhaps, after all, nearer to our version and others, it may be rendered, "after her dismissions" {g}; the dismissal or sending away of her and her sons, as before related; for this is by no means to be interpreted of a divorce of her; after which she was brought again to her husband; for there is no reason to believe that ever anything of that kind had passed, as some have thought {h}: the plain case seems to be this, that Moses finding his family would be exposed to danger, or would be too great an incumbrance upon him in the discharge of his great work he had to do in Egypt, sent them back to his father-in-law until a fit opportunity should offer of their coming to him, as now did.

{f} Sepher Shorash. rad. xlv "post dona vel donationes ejus"; so some in Vatablus and Drusius. {g} hyxwlv rha "post dimissiones ejus", Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius. {h} Vid. Selden. Uxor. Hebr. p. 629.

Exodus 18:3

Ver. 3. **And her two sons**,.... Those also Jethro took along with him and his daughter:

of which the name of the one was Gershom; which seems to be his firstborn, [Ex 2:22](#), his name signifies a desolate stranger, as some, or, "there I was a stranger": the reason of which name follows agreeably thereunto:

for he said, I have been an alien in a strange land; meaning, not the land of Egypt, where he was born, and had lived forty years; but in the land of Midian, where he was when this son of his was born; and which name was given him partly to keep up the memory of his flight to Midian, and partly to instruct his son, that Midian, though his native place, was not his proper country where he was to dwell, but another, even the land of Canaan.

Exodus 18:4

Ver. 4. **And the name of the other was Eliezer**,.... Who seems to be his second son, and was that which was circumcised by Zipporah at the inn, and about which there was such a stir, [Ex 4:24](#), and signifies "my God [is] help", or, his helper:

for the God of my father, [said he], was mine help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh; who, on hearing that Moses had killed an Egyptian, was wroth with him, and sought to slay him; and perhaps drew his sword for that purpose, but was prevented: however, this, in all human probability, would have been the case, that he would have fallen by his sword either in a private or public manner, had it not been for the interposition of divine Providence, and therefore he gave this name to his child, to be a standing memorial of it.

Exodus 18:5

Ver. 5. **And Jethro, Moses's father in law**,.... This is the third time he is so called in the chapter already, and many more times besides after in it; the reason of which seems to be, either to distinguish him from another of the same name, or to do him honour, that he should be in such a relation to so great and distinguished a man as Moses now was:

came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness; not with his own sons and wife, but with the sons and wife of Moses; Zipporah and her sons, as before related; with those he came into the wilderness of Arabia, where Moses now was, and which was not at a great distance from Midian, since about the same spot Moses,

when he dwelt there, had, and fed the flock of his father-in-law, [Ex 3:1](#), that part of the land of Midian where Jethro lived lay somewhere eastward of Mount Sinai, and was probably situated where Sharne now stands; which, according to Dr. Pocock {i}, is about a day and a half's journey from Mount Sinai, from whence the monks of Mount Sinai are chiefly supplied with fish {k}: it follows: where he encamped at the mount of God: at Horeb, where the Lord had appeared to Moses; and so the Targum of Jonathan adds,

"where the glory of the Lord was revealed to Moses at the beginning;"

and where, afterwards, the Lord, appeared again, and gave the law, and therefore is called the Mount of God; the one as well as the other being past when Moses wrote this book, and called the mountain by this name: it is matter of question at what time Jethro came hither, whether before or after the giving of the law: it seems, by the order in which this story is here placed, as if it was immediately after the battle with Amalek; and Saadiah Gaon is of opinion it was before the giving of the law; and one would think it most reasonable and natural that Jethro would take the first opportunity of visiting Moses, and that Moses would not long defer sending for his wife and children: but Aben Ezra thinks he did not come till the second year after the tabernacle was set up, since, in the context, mention is made of burnt offerings and sacrifices, and no account is given of a new altar built by Moses; and besides, he says, "I do make them know the statutes of God and his laws", [Ex 18:16](#), and it is certain from hence, that the children of Israel were removed from Rephidim, and were now encamped at the mount of God, at Horeb; but whether they had got to the other side of the mount of Sinai as yet is not so clear; though it looks as if what Moses did, by the advice of Jethro, was after the law was given on Sinai, see [De 1:6](#) so that, upon the whole, it seems as if this account, according to the order of time, should be placed after [Nu 10:28](#), or, as Dr. Lightfoot {l} thinks, between the tenth and eleventh verses of that chapter, and is put here to show that though Midian was near Amalek, as he observes, yet Jethro was exempt from the curse and destruction threatened to that, see [1Sa 15:6](#).

{i} Travels, p. 137. {k} See the Bishop of Clogher's Chronology of the Hebrew Bible, p. 214. {l} Works, vol. 1. p. 710, 711.

[Exodus 18:6](#)

Ver. 6. **And he said unto Moses**,.... By a messenger, as Jarchi: or by a written letter, as Aben Ezra: or, as the Septuagint version, "it was told to Moses, thy father", &c. for as yet he was not come to him, as appears by Moses going forth to meet him:

I thy father in law Jethro am come to thee: or, "am coming" {m}; for, as yet, he was not in his presence, and they were not personally present face to face: the Targum of Jonathan adds, "to become a proselyte"; but it seems that before, as well as now, he had been a worshipper of the true God, and always speaks like one that had had the fear of God before him continually:

and thy wife, and her sons with her; this he thought fit to acquaint him of by messenger or letter, that he might be in expectation of them, and not be surprised at once with their appearance: besides, as some observe, and not amiss, after the late attack of the Amalekites upon their rear, guards or sentinels might be placed in the outer parts of the camp for its safety, and who would not easily, without order, let strangers pass into it, and therefore previous notice was necessary to get admission.

{m} ab "veniens", Montanus.

Exodus 18:7

Ver. 7. And Moses went out to meet his father in law,.... Out of the camp, at least out of his tent: the Targum of Jonathan says, from under the cloud of glory; how far he went is not certain, nor material to know: this was an instance of his great humility and modesty, and was doing Jethro a great deal of honour; that one who was in such great dignity, at the head of such a vast body of people, and superior to him both in natural and spiritual abilities, yet condescended to go forth in person to meet him, when he might have sent a guard of his men to escort him to his camp, which would have been honour sufficient; and it is not said he went out to meet his wife and children; for Aben Ezra says it was not usual for honourable men so to do:

and did obeisance: to Jethro, bowed unto him and worshipped him in a civil way, after the manner of the eastern nations, who used to make very low bows to whom they paid civil respect:

and kissed him; not to make him a proselyte, as the above Targum, nor in token of subjection, but of affection and friendship; it being usual for relations and friends to kiss each other at meeting or parting:

and they asked each other of their welfare; or "peace" {n}; of their prosperity and happiness, temporal and spiritual, of their peace, inward and outward, and of the bodily health of them and their families:

and they came into the tent; the Targum of Jonathan says,

"into the tabernacle of the house of doctrine,"

or school room; which is not likely, since Jethro was a man well instructed in divine things, and needed not to be put to school; and if he did, it can hardly be thought that as soon as Moses met him he should set about the instruction of him; but into his tent where he dwelt; that, as Aben Ezra says, which was the known tent of Moses, though it is not expressly said his tent.

{n} Mwlvl "ad pacem", Montanus; "de pace", Munster, Fagius, Drusius, Piscator; so Ainsworth.

Exodus 18:8

Ver. 8. And Moses told his father in law all that the Lord had done unto Pharaoh,.... After the proper civilities had passed, and Jethro had been refreshed with food and drink, as is highly probable, they entered into a conversation about what had lately passed, which Jethro had had a general report of, and which had brought him hither, and therefore it would be very entertaining to him to have the particulars of it; and Moses begins with what the Lord had done to Pharaoh, how he had inflicted his plagues upon him one after another, and at last slew his firstborn, and destroyed him and his host in the Red sea:

and to the Egyptians, for Israel's sake; the several plagues affecting them, especially the last, the slaughter of their firstborn; and who also were spoiled of their riches by the Israelites, and a numerous army of them drowned in the Red sea, and all because of the people of Israel; because they had made their lives bitter in hard bondage, had refused to let them go out of the land, and when they were departed pursued after them to fetch them back or cut them off:

and all the travail that had come upon them by the way; to the Red sea, and at Marah, and Rephidim, and how Amalek fought with them, as the Targum of Jonathan observes; what a fright they were put into, when pursued by Pharaoh and his host behind them, the rocks on each side of them, and the sea before them; their want of water in the wilderness, not being able to drink of the waters at Marah because bitter; their hunger, having no bread nor flesh in the wilderness of Sin, and their violent thirst, and no water to allay it, in the plains of Rephidim, and where also they were attacked by an army of the Amalekites:

and how the Lord delivered them; out of all this travail and trouble, and out of the hands of all their enemies, Egyptians and Amalekites.

Exodus 18:9

Ver. 9. **And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the Lord had done to Israel,....** In giving them the manna and the well, as the above Targum, bread to eat when hungry, and water to drink when thirsty; to which Jarchi adds, and the law, for he supposes the meeting of Jethro and Moses was after the law was given on Mount Sinai, though here recorded; but this goodness may be extended to other things, as the saving of their firstborn at the time of the Lord's passover, giving them favour in the sight of the Egyptians, of whom they borrowed or asked things of value, of gold, silver, and jewels, bringing them out of Egypt with an high hand, going before them in a pillar of cloud and fire by day and night, dividing the waters of the sea for them to pass through as on dry land, and doing for them the above things related, and giving them victory over Amalek; and it may be observed that the joy of Jethro was not merely on account of the goodness of God done to Moses, a relation of his, having married his daughter; but because of the great and good things God had done for Israel, his special and peculiar people, the worshippers of the true and living God, for whom Jethro had an affection, because they were so, and therefore rejoiced in their prosperity: whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians; whom he had wrought upon to give them leave to depart from them, and destroyed them when they pursued after them, first delivered them from their bondage, and then from their rage and wrath.

Exodus 18:10

Ver. 10. **And Jethro said,....** Like a truly good man, as one that knew the Lord and feared him, and was desirous of giving him the praise and glory of all the wonderful things he had done:

blessed be the Lord, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians: and out of the hand of Pharaoh; meaning particularly Moses and Aaron, the messengers of God, as Aben Ezra observes, who went to Pharaoh in the peril of their lives, and whom he sometimes threatened with death; but the Lord delivered them both out of his hands, and out of the hands of his ministers and people, who, doubtless, must be at times enraged at them for the plagues they brought upon them; for the persons here pointed at are manifestly distinguished from the body of the people of Israel next mentioned:

who hath delivered the people from the hand of the Egyptians: the people of Israel, from the hard bondage and cruel slavery they were held under by the Egyptians; which, as it was the Lord's doing, Jethro gives him the glory of it, and blesses him for it, or ascribes to him, on account of it, blessing, honour, glory, and praise.

Exodus 18:11

Ver. 11. **Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods**,.... He knew the Lord before, and that he was the only true God, and greater than all that were so called; but now he had a fresh instance of it, a clear proof and demonstration of it, and so more plainly and fully knew it, and was assured of it, that he was greater than all the idols of the Gentiles, and particularly than the gods of the Egyptians; since he had saved his people Israel out of their hands, and when they could not protect and defend the Egyptians neither from plagues nor from destruction; nay, could not secure themselves, being all destroyed by the mighty Jehovah, see [Ex 12:12](#), as also that he is greater than all that are called gods, kings, princes, and civil magistrates, than Pharaoh and all his nobles, generals, and captains, who were destroyed by him: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them; the idol gods, the gods of the Egyptians, the evil demons, Satan and his principalities, who influenced them, presuming and boasting by their magicians what they could do; but in those things Jehovah in the wonders he wrought appeared to be above them; they were overcome by him, and obliged to acknowledge the finger of God; and this sense stands best connected with the preceding clause: or else in those things, in which the Egyptians dealt proudly with the Israelites, pursuing after them in the pride and vanity of their minds, and giving out that they should overtake them and divide the spoil, and satisfy their lust upon them, when God blew with his wind upon them, the sea covered them, and they sunk as lead in the mighty waters, see [Ex 15:9](#), and to the drowning of the Egyptians in the Red sea, the Jews commonly apply this: thus the Targum of Jonathan,

"wherein the Egyptians dealt wickedly in judging Israel, by the waters, judgment returned upon them that they might be judged by the waters;"

and to the same sense Jarchi: they suppose here was a just retaliation, that as the Egyptians drowned the Hebrew infants in the waters of the Nile, they were in righteous judgment drowned in the Red sea; this is the very thing, or is the same way they in their pride and malice dealt with the people of Israel; God dealt with them, and showed himself to be both "against them" {o}, as it may be rendered, and above them.

{o} Mhyle "contra eos", Pagninus, Montanus; "contra illos", V. L. Tigurine version; so Reinbech "de accent". Heb. p. 314.

Exodus 18:12

Ver. 12. **And Jethro, Moses's father in law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God,....** The burnt offering, which was either of the flock or of the herd, was wholly consumed by fire, from whence it had its name; the peace offering for thanksgiving, which seemed to be meant by the sacrifices here, the flesh of them were to be eaten, [Le 7:15](#) and now a feast was kept, as the latter part of the verse shows: whether Jethro brought cattle along with him for such a purpose, and so "gave" {p} or "offered" them for a burnt offering and sacrifices to God; as the word for took may be rendered, one and the same word signifying both to give and take, see [Ps 68:18](#), compared with [Eph 4:8](#) or whether, with the leave of Moses and the children of Israel, he took them out of their flocks and herds, it matters not, since this is only observed to show Jethro's devotion to God, and the grateful sense he had of the divine goodness to Israel; and since he was a priest of Midian, as he is generally said to be, and a priest of the most high God, as Melchizedek was, he might offer sacrifices; for it does not appear that he delivered them to others to be offered, or that these were slain by Aaron; for, though he is after mentioned, yet not as a sacrificer, but as a guest; and perhaps this might be before he and his sons were separated to the priest's office, or, at least, before they had entered upon it; nor is this mention of a burnt offering and sacrifices any proof of Jethro's meeting Moses after the giving of the law, since, before that, sacrifices were in use, and Jethro being a grandchild of Abraham, might have learnt the use of them from him:

and Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with Moses's father in law, before God; the tents of Moses being on the east side of the tabernacle, as Aben Ezra says, in which was the mercy seat and cherubim, between which the divine Majesty was; but there is no need to suppose that the tabernacle was now built, for this tent of Moses might be placed before or near the pillar of cloud in which Jehovah was; or the sense may only be, that they ate their food in the presence of God, in the fear of the Lord, with gladness and singleness of heart, as good men do; and especially as this was an eucharistic sacrifice unto God they partook of, Aaron and the elders came out of a civil respect to Jethro, to take a meal with him, as well as to join with him in a religious action: the bread they ate was, no doubt, the manna, which Jethro, though a Midianite, yet a descendant of Abraham, and a good man, partook of, and is put for the whole repast, the flesh of the sacrifices and what else were eaten: no mention is made of Moses, nor was there any need of it, as Aben Ezra observes, it being his tent in which they were: the Targum of Jonathan adds,

"Moses stood and ministered before them;"

and so says Jarchi; which is not very probable, it being not agreeable to the dignity of his station and office.

{p} xqyw "acceptumque obtulit", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Fagius, Drusius.

Exodus 18:13

Ver. 13. **And it came to pass on the morrow**,.... The above Targum paraphrases it,

"on the day after the day of atonement:"

and so Jarchi observes the same, out of a book of theirs called Siphri; but rather this was either the day after the entertainment of Jethro with Aaron and the elders in the tent of Moses, or the day after Jethro's coming, as Aben Ezra:

that Moses sat to judge the people; though his father-in-law was come to visit him, yet he did not neglect the care of his people, and the business that lay upon his hands for their good, civil and religious; but, the very day following his coming, closely applied himself to hear and judge causes; and such a vast body of people must find him work enough; and especially if we consider their quarrelsome disposition, for if they were so to one another, as they were to Moses and Aaron, they must be very litigious; however Moses bore with them, and attended to their causes, to do justice and judgment among them, being now made a prince and a judge over them by divine authority, and whom they acknowledged as such:

and the people stood by Moses, from the morning unto the evening; not that a single cause was so long a trying, but there being so many of them in one day, that they lasted from the morning tonight; so that when one cause was dispatched and the parties dismissed, another succeeded, and so continued all the day long: Moses he sat as judge, with great majesty, gravity, and sedateness, hearkening with all attention to what was said on both sides, and the people they "stood", both plaintiff and defendant, as became them.

Exodus 18:14

Ver. 14. **And when Moses's father in law saw all that he did to the people**,.... Or for

them {q}; for their information and instruction in the laws of God, and for the decision of cases brought before him, according to them; and what a deal of business was on his hands, and he went through for the good of the people:

he said, **what is this thing that thou doest to the people?** this question he put, not as being ignorant what he did, he saw what he did, and understood it full well, but this he said to lead on to some conversation upon this head:

why sittest thou thyself alone? no other judge upon the bench with him to assist him, to take it by turns, and to relieve and ease him:

and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even? not being able to get their causes heard and tried, there being so many of them; and therefore some were obliged to wait all day long, before they could have their business done, which was both fatiguing to him and them.

{q} Mel "propter populum" Vatablus.

Exodus 18:15

Ver. 15. **And Moses said unto his father in law,**.... In answer to his question; and there were two things, as Aben Ezra observes, he did to the people, and for which they came to him; the one is observed in this verse, and the other in the next:

because the people come unto me to inquire of God; of his mind and will in certain cases, and of his statutes and laws, as the following verse shows; what they should observe, and according to which they should conduct themselves: they came to inquire what God would have them to do; and, in doubtful cases, what was his will and pleasure, and to desire Moses to inform them; and if the things were of such a nature that he could not easily and readily do it, then to inquire of God for them, which in later times was done by Urim and Thummim.

Exodus 18:16

Ver. 16. **When they have a matter, they come unto me,**.... This is the other thing he did for them, as the above writer observes; which being last mentioned, he speaks of first, as follows, meaning that when there was a matter in difference between two persons or more, and they could not agree upon it among themselves, then they brought it to him to be heard and decided:

and I judge between one and another; hear what they have to say on both sides, and then judge which is in the right and which is in the wrong, and determine what is to be done, according to the laws of God or according to the rules of justice and equity:

and I do make them know the statutes of God and his laws; this relates to the first thing, their coming to him to inquire of God, what is his mind and will, or what he would have them do; and in order to this, and in answer to their request, he instructed them in the laws of God, both civil and religious: this is made use of by some, to prove that Jethro's coming to Moses was after the law was given: but this does not necessarily follow, because Moses, by a divine impulse, might be directed immediately to make known to the people what was the will and mind of God, with respect to any particular case they inquired about; and rather this seems to furnish out an argument to the contrary, since, if the laws and statutes of God had yet been given on Mount Sinai, the people could not have been ignorant of them, and so needed not such daily information and instruction from Moses. Exodus 18:17 Ver. 17. And Moses's father in law said unto him,.... Having observed what he did, and heard his answer to the question he put to him: the thing that thou doest is not good; not meaning that it was not morally good, or that it was morally evil; for it was certainly a good thing to inquire of the mind and will of God for the people, and to hear and decide matters in controversy between them, and do justice to both parties; but it was not good for the health of Moses; it was not commodious and convenient for him; it was not for his bodily welfare; it was too much for him, as he explains himself in the next verse. Exodus 18:18 Ver. 18. Thou wilt surely wear away,.... His natural strength and animal spirits, and so his flesh; he feared his constant application and attendance to business would impair his health, break his constitution, and bring him into a consumption. Moses was naturally of a strong and vigorous constitution; for, forty years after this, even to the time of his death, his natural force was not abated; or "fading thou wilt fade", or, "falling thou wilt fall" {r}; in allusion to the leaves of trees in autumn, which fade, and wither, and fall: both thou and this people that is with thee; it was tiresome to the people, as well as fatiguing to Moses, who, because of the multitude of cases, were obliged to wait a long time, some of them from morning to night, and yet could not get their suit to come and so were obliged to attend next day, and perhaps day after day. The Targum of Jonathan is, "even thou also, Aaron and his sons, and the elders that are with them;" and so Jarchi; but these do not seem to have been assisting to him at all, as appears by what follows: for this thing is too heavy for thee: it was too great a burden upon his shoulders, what his strength was not equal to; for though his internal abilities were exceeding great, and he had a good will to the work, to serve God and his people, yet it was more, humanly speaking, than his bodily strength would admit of, or any mortal man could go through: thou art not able to perform it thyself alone; and this Moses was sensible of himself afterwards, and says

the same thing, De 1:9. {r} lbt lbn "marcescendo marcesses", Montanus; so Ainsworth; "cadendo cades", Pagninus. Exodus 18:19 Ver. 19. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel,.... Jethro being the elder man, and of some character and figure, being either a priest or prince of Midian, or both, might, without incurring a censure, take upon him to give advice to Moses, a younger man, and his son-in-law, though he was superior to him in office and in parts; and especially since his advice proceeded from a sincere and cordial regard for his health and welfare: and God shall be with thee: and succeed the advice he gave, which he persuaded himself would be agreeable to the will of God, and attending to it he would prosper, and find that the method taken would be blessed of God, and issue in his own good and the good of the people; or it may be taken prayerwise, as by some, "may God be with thee" {s}; to direct thee to what thou shouldest do, either to take the advice, or reject it; and be it as it will, he wished him well, and that he might have his health, and that as his day was, his strength might be: be thou for the people to God-ward; or on the part of God, as Aben Ezra interprets it; that part of his work he advised him to retain by all means, which lay more immediately between God and the people; to be a mediator between them; to transact affairs for them with God; to inquire his mind and will in matters difficult and doubtful; to be, as Jarchi expresses it, a messenger and interpreter between them, and an inquirer of judgments of him, or what statutes and judgments he would have observed by them: that thou mayest bring the causes unto God; concerning which, as yet, he had given no directions as a rule to go by. {s} Kme Myhla yhyw see Poole in loc. Exodus 18:20 Ver. 20. And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws,.... Both with respect to things civil and religious, which he should receive from God: and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk; the path of faith and duty, the way of truth, holiness, and righteousness: and the work that they must do; both with respect to God, and one another, the various duties and exercises of religion, everything relating to their moral, religious, and civil conduct. Exodus 18:21 Ver. 21. Moreover, thou shalt provide out of all the people,.... Or look out {t} from among them; see Ac 6:3, able men; or "men of power" {u}; meaning not so much men of strong and robust constitutions, who, as Aben Ezra says, are able to bear labour; but men that have strength of heart, as Ben Gersom expresses it, men of spirit and courage, and are not afraid to do justice, to repress vice, and countenance virtue; or, as Maimonides says {w}, have a strong heart, or courage and boldness to deliver the oppressed from the hands of the oppressor. Jarchi interprets it of rich men, of men of substance, who have no need to flatter, or play the hypocrite, and to know the faces of men: such as fear God; who have the fear of God before their eyes, and on their hearts, in all they do, and therefore cannot do those things that others do, who are destitute of it; cannot give a cause the wrong way wilfully, or pervert judgment, and are the reverse of the character of the unjust judge, that neither feared God nor regarded man, Lu 18:2: men of truth; true men, sincere, upright, and faithful men, that love truth and hate lies and falsehood, and will take some pains to get at the truth of a cause, to inquire where it

lies, and pursue and encourage it where it is found, and discourage to the uttermost falsehood, lies, and perjury: hating covetousness; in themselves and others, filthy lucre, dishonest gain, mammon of unrighteousness, and so not to be bribed and corrupted, and execute wrong judgment for the sake of money: and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens; meaning not courts of judicature, consisting of such a number of judges, for such a court was never known to have a thousand judges upon the bench at once; the highest court of judicature that ever was among the Jews, which was long after this time, consisted but of seventy or seventy one: but the sense is, that each of these should have such a number of persons, or rather families, under their care, who, when they applied unto them for justice, should faithfully administer it to them; See Gill on "Ex 18:25". {t} hzxt "videbis", Montanus; "tu prospice", Tigurine version; "tu videto", Drusius. {u} lyx yvna "viros virtutis", Montanus, Vatablus; "viros fortitudinis", Cartwright. {w} Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 7. Exodus 18:22 Ver. 22. And let them judge the people at all times,.... In their several districts, whenever a matter of difference between man and man arises, and the case is brought before them, let them judge impartially between them, and determine what is right and wrong, and execute judgment and justice truly; which would take off a great deal of business from the hands of Moses: and it shall be that every great matter they shall bring to thee; any affair of great importance, and difficult of determination, and about which the judges may have some doubt in their minds, and they are not clear as to the decision of it; this, they the judges, not the people, were to bring to Moses: but every small matter; which is of no great importance, or is easy of decision, where the right and the wrong clearly appear, and there is no difficulty in the determination of it: so shall it be easier for thyself; to go through the business that would be necessarily devolved upon him, as the chief ruler and governor, supreme judge, lawgiver, leader, and commander: and they shall bear the burden with thee; of ruling and judging the people; they taking a share of it, it would sit the lighter and easier upon him; and the whole seems to be wise and prudent counsel. Exodus 18:23 Ver. 23. If thou shall do this thing,.... Hearken to the advice given, and put it in execution, by choosing out of the people, and placing over them, judges qualified, as directed: and God command thee so; for he did not desire him to follow his advice any further than it appeared to be according to the will of God, which he doubted not he would inquire about; and if he found it was agreeable to it, and should pursue it: then thou shall be able to endure; to continue in his office and post, and hold on for years to come, God granting him life and health; whereas otherwise, in all human probability, he must waste and wear away apace: and all this people shall also go to their place in peace; having had their cases heard and tried, and their differences adjusted to satisfaction; and quick dispatch being made, they would return to their tents or places of abode in much peace of mind, and sit down contented with the determination made, and pleased that the lawsuit was not protracted to any unreasonable length of time. Jarchi interprets all this people, of

Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and the seventy elders that came with him, as if they by this means would be eased, and so pleased with it. Exodus 18:24 Ver. 24. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law,.... Considered what he said, weighed it well in his mind, and judged it good advice, and determined to follow it:and did all that he had said; by choosing such men as he directed to, and committing the judgment of the people to them, as follows: Exodus 18:25 Ver. 25. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel,.... He looked among them, and selected the best of them, such as most answered to the qualifications it was requisite they should have; and though only one of them is here mentioned, which is the first Jethro gave, yet no doubt they were all attended to, though not expressed:and made them heads over the people; rulers, governors, judges, and officers; this is a general word, comprehending their several particular offices they sustained; which seem to be chiefly distinguished by the different numbers of people, or families, under them, otherwise their work and office were much the same:rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens; just as Jethro advised, Ex 18:21. According to the Targum of Jonathan, the rulers of thousands were six hundred, rulers of hundreds 6000, rulers of fifties 12,000, and the rulers of tens 60,000; and so Jarchi; and the like account is given in both the Talmuds {x}, where the whole is summed up, amounting to 78,600; which account Aben Ezra disapproves of, and thinks not credible: it is built upon the number of Israel at this time, when they came out of Egypt, being 600,000 men; and so if there was a ruler to every thousand men, there must be six hundred of them, and so on; but these thousands may intend not individual persons, but families, that these were appointed over, as the families of Israel and Judah are called their thousands, Mic 5:2 and this will serve greatly to reduce the number of these judges and officers. {x} T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 19. 3. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 18. 1. Exodus 18:26 Ver. 26. And they judged the people at all seasons,.... Any day in the week, or any time in the day, whenever there was any occasion for them, and cases were brought before them:the hard cases they brought unto Moses; that is, the judges brought them to Moses when such came before them which were too hard for them, it was difficult to them to determine rightly about them, then they brought them to be heard and decided by him; for the judges, and not the people, best knew when a case was hard or easy to determine:but every small matter they judged themselves; and gave it as they saw was most agreeable to justice and equity, and did not trouble Moses with it; by which means he was eased of a great deal of business and fatigue, which was Jethro's view in giving the advice he did. Exodus 18:27 Ver. 27. And Moses let his father in law depart,.... After he had been with him some time, and desired leave to go into his own country, which was granted; or he "dismissed" {y} him in an honourable way: and as he went out to meet him when he came, if he did not attend him, when he went, some way in person, yet sent a guard along with him, both for honour and for safety:and he went his way into his own land; the land of Midian: the Targum of Jonathan,"he went to proselyte all the children of his own

country;"or, as Jarchi expresses it, the children of his family; and it is plain that the Kenites and Rechabites descended from him, who in later times lived among the Jews, and were proselytes to their religion, Jud 1:16. {y} xlvyw "et dimisit", V. L. Tigurine version, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius, Piscator.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 19:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 19

In this chapter we have an account of the coming of the children of Israel to Mount Sinai, [Ex 19:1](#), of the covenant made with them there, the proposal on the part of God, and their acceptance of it,

[Ex 19:3](#), the previous notice God gave three days before of his appearance on the mount, the orders for their preparation to meet him, and the execution of them, [Ex 19:9](#), the awful and tremendous appearance of God upon the mount, [Ex 19:6](#) and the strict charge given, that neither people nor priests should come near and gaze, only Moses and Aaron with him were to come up, bounds being set to prevent the rest, [Ex 19:21](#), and the chapter is closed with observing, that Moses went down from the mount, and delivered to the people what the Lord spoke to and by him, [Ex 19:25](#).

Ver. 1. **In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt,....** Which was the month Sivan, and answers to part of May and part of June:

the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai; which had its name from the mountain situated in it, and that from the bushes which grew upon it. Justin {z} calls it Synan, which he says Moses occupied, and Strabo {a}, Sinnan. Hither they came either on the same day they came from Rephidim; which, according to Bunting {b}, were eight miles from it, or on the same day of the month, as to number, that is, on the third day of the third month; and so Jerom {c} and others say it was on the forty seventh day after their coming out of Egypt, three days after which they received the law on Mount Sinai, it being a generally received notion that the law was given fifty days after the passover; hence the feast of weeks is called from thence the feast of pentecost, or fifty days: or rather this was the first day of the month, as Jarchi and R. Moses; with which agrees the Targum of Jonathan; and so was the forty fifth of their coming out of Egypt, five days after which they received the law; it being a tradition with the Jews, as Aben Ezra observes, that that was given on the sixth of Sivan, and may be accounted for thus; on the first day they came to Sinai, and encamped there, on the day following Moses went up to God, [Ex 19:3](#), on the third day Moses gathered the elders together, [Ex 19:7](#), and declared to them the words of God, and on the third day after that, which was the sixth, the law was delivered to them.

{z} E Trogo, l. 36. c. 2. {a} Geograph. l. 16. p. 520. {b} Travels, p. 82. {c} Epist. Fabiolae de 42 mansion. fol. 15. c. 1. tom. 3.

Exodus 19:2

Ver. 2. **For they were departed from Rephidim,**.... After they had fought with Amalek, and came to the western part of the mount to Horeb, where the rock was smitten for them; and they were come from that now, and encamped at Sinai, after Jethro had paid a visit to Moses:

and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in this wilderness; that is, of Sinai, as in the preceding verse:

and there Israel encamped before the mount; Mount Sinai, from whence the desert or wilderness was called. This, as Jarchi says, was on the east side of the mount; Horeb and Sinai were but one and the same mountain, which had two tops. Horeb was on the western side, near to which lay the plain of Rephidim; and Sinai was on the eastern side, on which the wilderness of that name bordered: so that the children of Israel, when they came from Rephidim, came from the western side, and took a circuit about and came to the eastern; which, according to a fore mentioned writer, was eight miles, and was the twelfth station or mansion of the children of Israel. This number twelve is taken notice of by some, as having something singular and peculiar in it; there were the twelve tribes of Israel, and at their twelfth mansion the law was given them; Christ had twelve apostles, and there are twelve foundations of the new Jerusalem, and 12,000 were sealed out of every tribe of Israel.

Exodus 19:3

Ver. 3. **And Moses went up unto God,**.... Who was in the pillar of cloud upon the top of the mount; this was on the second day, according to the Targum of Jonathan: "the Lord called unto him out of the mountain"; or had called unto him, as Aben Ezra, since without his leave he could not have gone up. He called to him out of the cloud upon the top of the mountain to come up, and being come near him, he called to him, and spoke with an articulate voice, as follows:

saying, thus shalt thou say, to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; which are the same, and are described as descending from the same person, who was called by both names; the one was his name in the former and lower state of his life, the other in the latter and more prosperous one; and his posterity are called by these two names, as Bishop Patrick observes, to put them in mind, that they who had lately been as low as Jacob, when he went to Padanaram, were now grown as great as God made him when he came from thence, and was called Israel.

Exodus 19:4

Ver. 4. **Ye have seen what I did to the Egyptians,**.... The plagues he brought upon them in Egypt, and the destruction of them at the Red sea; these things they were eyewitnesses of, and needed no other proof or evidence to convince and assure them of them, and therefore must be under obligation to attend to what he was about to recommend unto them, for which reason this is observed:

and [how] I bore you on eagles' wings; that is, as on eagles' wings, the note of similitude being wanting, but to be supplied; for it cannot be thought that they were literally bore on eagles' wings; but as that creature is reported to be very affectionate to its young, and careful of it, and, as is said, only to one; for, having more, it will cast away all but one, and reserve that, which it carefully nourishes; and being swift of flight, and strong of wing, it will in a remarkable manner take its young upon it, and safely and swiftly convey it where it pleases; of which See Gill on "De 32:11". The eagle excels other birds both in its strength and in the size of its body; and especially its pectoral muscles, by which its wings are supported; are very strong, so that it can carry its young, and other things, on its back and wings; and some such thing nature itself seems to have required, as naturalists observe {d}; and there are some histories, which, if true, greatly confirm and illustrate this. Aelianus {e} reports of Tilgamus, a Babylonian, and who afterwards was king of Babylon, and who seems to be the Tilgath Pilneser of the Scriptures, king of Assyria, that when a lad, being thrown down from the top of a tower, an eagle, which is a very quick sighted bird, saw him, and, before he came to the ground, flew under him, took him upon its back, and carried him into a garden, and gently let him down. So it is related of Aristomenes {f}, that as he was casting headlong into a deep ditch by the Lacedemonians, where they used to throw condemned malefactors, an eagle flew under him, and bore him on its wings, and carried him to the bottom, without any hurt to any part of his body. Jarchi observes, that whereas other birds carry their young between their feet, for fear of those that fly above them, the eagle flying above all others, and so in no fear of them, carries its young upon its wings, judging it better that a dart should pierce that than its young. The Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase the words,

"and I bore you on clouds, as on eagles' wings;"

which covered, and protected, and sustained them, as the eagles' wings do its young; the former adds, from Pelusium, a city in Egypt, supposed by the Targumist to be the same with Rameses; where Jarchi observes the people of Israel were very swiftly gathered together as the place of their rendezvous, and were as safely brought from

thence to the place where they now were. Thus the Lord showed an affectionate concern for Israel, took them under his care and protection, stood between them and the Egyptians in a pillar of cloud, and secured them from their arrows, and swiftly and safely removed them from the land of Egypt to the place where they now were, distinguishing them from all other nations, having chosen them to be a special people to himself:

and brought you unto myself: to the mountain of God, where he had appeared to Moses, and given this as a sign and token of the truth of his mission, that he and Israel, when brought out of Egypt by him, should serve him on this mount; and now they were brought thither, where he was about not only to grant his presence in a very singular manner, but to deliver his law unto them, and enter into a covenant with them, and establish and settle them as his people; so that they were a people near unto the Lord, taken into covenant, and indulged with communion with him, and made partakers of various distinguished blessings of his: both the above Targums are, "I brought you to the doctrine of my law", to receive it at this mount.

{d} Scheuchzer. Physica Sacra, vol. 2. p. 186. {e} Hist. Animal. l. 12. c. 21. {f} Pausaniae Messenica, sive, l. 4. p. 250, 251.

Exodus 19:5

Ver. 5. **Now therefore**,.... Since they had received such marks of his favour, and were laid under great obligations to him:

if ye will obey my voice indeed; truly, sincerely, and heartily; or "in hearkening hearken", or "in obeying obey" {g}; that is, closely and attentively hearken to what he should say to them, and thoroughly and constantly yield a cheerful obedience to his commands:

and keep my covenant; now about to be made with them, which would consist of promises of good things to be done to them on his part, and of duties to be performed by them on their part, and so would constitute a formal covenant by stipulation and restipulation:

then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; be as highly valued by him, and as carefully preserved as the richest treasure among men; even as the treasure of princes, consisting of gold and silver, precious stones, pearls and jewels, and everything that is valuable; and of this he would give such proof and demonstration, as would make it appear that they were esteemed by him above all

people upon the face of the earth; being chosen for his peculiar treasure, and redeemed out of the house of bondage and slavery to be his peculiar people, and distinguished from all others by particular favours and blessings:

for all the earth is mine; as it is, and the inhabitants of it, by creation, sustentation, preservation, and dominion, all being made, upheld, preserved, and governed by him; and therefore, as he had a right to all, could choose what part he pleased for his special use and service; or "though all the earth is mine" {h}, as Marinus in Aben Ezra, which yet the latter does not seem to approve of; and then the sense is, though the whole world was his, and all that is in it, yet such was his special affection, and peculiar regard to Israel, as to choose them, and esteem them as his portion and inheritance, his jewel, and peculiar treasure.

{g} wemvt ewmv "obediendo obedieritis", Pagninus, Montanus; "audiendo audiveritis", Drusius; "auscultando auscultabitis", Piscator; so Ainsworth. {h} yk "tametsi", Vatablus; "quamvis", Piscator, Drusius.

[Exodus 19:6](#)

Ver. 6. **And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests**,.... Instead of being in a state of servitude and bondage, as they had been in Egypt, they should be erected into a kingdom, become a body politic, a free state, a commonwealth governed by its own laws, and those laws of God's making; yea, they should be a kingdom to him, and he be more immediately the king of them, as he was not of others, the government of Israel being a Theocracy; and this kingdom should consist of men that were priests, who had access to God, served him, and offered sacrifice to him; or of men greatly esteemed and honoured, as priests were in those times. Jarchi interprets it, a kingdom of princes, as the word sometimes signifies: the subjects of this kingdom were princes, men of a princely spirit, and these princes, like those of the king of Babylon, who boasted they were altogether kings; and like the Roman senators, of whom the ambassador of Pyrrhus said, that he saw at Rome as many kings as he saw senators. And so here all the Targums render it, "kings and priests": to which reference seems to be had not only in [1Pe 2:9](#) but in [Re 1:6](#), they were kings when they got the victory, as in the times of Joshua, over the several kings of Canaan, and had their kingdoms divided among them; and before the priesthood was settled in the family of Aaron, every head of a family in Israel was a priest; and they were all priests at the passover, as Philo {i} observes: and so the spiritual Israel of God are kings and priests; they are kings, having the power and riches of kings; having got through Christ the victory over sin, Satan, and the world; and being possessed of the kingdom of grace, and heirs of the kingdom of glory; and priests, being allowed to draw nigh to

God, to present themselves, souls and bodies, a holy and living sacrifice, to offer to him the sacrifices of prayer and praise through Christ, by whom they become acceptable to him: "and an holy nation"; being separated from all others, and devoted to the worship and service of God, having holy laws, and holy ordinances, and a holy service, and a holy place to perform it in, and holy persons to attend unto it, as they afterwards had. In allusion to this, the spiritual Israel, or people of God, are also called so, [1Pe 2:9](#) being chosen unto holiness, redeemed from all iniquity, called with an holy calling, sanctified by the blood of Christ, and made holy by the Spirit of God, and under the influence of his grace live holy lives and conversations:

these are the words thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel: what he would have them do, and they were bound to do in a way of duty to him, and what he in a way of grace would do for them, and they should be unto him,

{i} De Vita Mosis, l. 3. p. 686.

[Exodus 19:7](#)

Ver. 7. **And Moses came and called for the elders of the people**,.... After he had heard the above words from the mouth of God, he came down from the mount into the camp of Israel, and sent for the elders or principal men of the tribes and families of Israel to come to him:

and, being gathered together,

laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him; expressed them in the plainest manner, set them in the clearest light to their minds and consciences; so that they thoroughly understood them, were fully convinced of the propriety of these things God required of them, and their obligation to observe them, and saw plainly the greatness and importance of what he promised unto them.

[Exodus 19:8](#)

Ver. 8. **And all the people answered together**,.... By their heads and representatives, the elders, summoned before Moses, to whom he declared the whole will of God; or this being communicated by them to their respective tribes and families, they were all of one mind; there was not a contradicting voice among them, they all gave the same answer, or all united in returning for answer what follows:

all that the Lord hath spoken we will do; obey his voice in all things he directs unto, or commands to be done, and keep the covenant he should make with them, and observe whatever was required on their parts; which was well spoken, if with the heart, and if, under a consciousness of their own weakness, they had expressed their desire of dependence upon the grace of God to enable them to perform, see [De 5:28](#). The Septuagint version adds, "and we will hear", or be obedient, as in [Ex 24:7](#):

and Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord; not for his information, who knew very well what they had said, but for the discharge of his office as a mediator and messenger between God and them: this, according to Jarchi, was on the third day of the month.

[Exodus 19:9](#)

Ver. 9. **And the Lord said unto Moses**,.... As the Targum of Jonathan, on the third day; though Jarchi says the fourth; which seems not so well to agree with his words on the preceding verse, since it seems to be at the same time that Moses returned the words of the people to the Lord, that he said what follows to him:

lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud; which was different from the pillar of cloud in which he went before the people, and now stood in it on the top of the mount; for he speaks not now of his present appearance to Moses, but of his appearance on the mount three days after; wherefore the Septuagint version wrongly renders it, "in a pillar of cloud": there were appearances of the divine Majesty in a cloud frequently afterwards, both in the Old and New Testament, see [Ex 40:34](#) and so Christ, the mighty Angel, is said to be clothed with a cloud, [Re 10:1](#). And from such appearances as these, the Heathens have represented their deities, as Apollo {k}, Venus {l}, Juno {m}, and others, coming in a cloud, or clothed with one:

that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever; they had believed Moses already, particularly at the Red sea, when they saw what was done there, but afterwards, as it seems, returned to their unbelief again; but now, as they would be eyewitnesses of the cloud in which the Lord would appear to Moses, so they would be ear witnesses of what he said to him; for though the cloud was a thick one in which he came, so that they could not see any similitude, any likeness at all, not so much as a brightness, a shining glory, as they had seen in the pillar of cloud, see [Ex 16:7](#), yet, the voice of God out of it was so loud, when he spoke with Moses, that this vast body of people being placed around, at the lower part of the mount, heard plainly and distinctly all that was said; so that they were sure they were not imposed upon by Moses, but that the law he delivered to them was from God, since they heard it with

their own ears; and therefore they and their posterity believed it for ever, and never entertained the least distrust of the divinity and authority of it. This case was widely different from that of Numa or Mahomet, the one pretending to receive instructions from the goddess Egeria, and the other from the angel Gabriel; but all depended upon their own word, none were, nor did they pretend that any were eye or ear witnesses of what they declared; but such was the case here:

and Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord; the same which he is said to return to him in the preceding verse, and here repeated for the confirmation of it, and to lead on to what the Lord had to say further concerning them.

{k} "Nnbe et candentes humeros amictus Augur Apollo. -----" Horat. Carmin. l. 1. ode 2. {l} "Et Venus aethereos inter dea candida nimbos Dona ferens aderat ----". Virgil. Aeneid, l. 8. "prope finem". "Hoc Venus obscuro faciem circumdata nimbo Detulit. ---" Virgil. Aeneid, l. 12. {m} "Agens hyemem nimbo succincta, per auras ----". Ib. Aeneid. 10.

Exodus 19:10

Ver. 10. **And the Lord said unto Moses**,.... On the fourth day, according to the Targum of Jonathan;

go unto the people; go down from the mountain, from the top of it, where he now was, to the camp of Israel, which was pitched before it:

and sanctify them today and tomorrow; the fourth and fifth days of the month; that is, he was, to instruct them how they were to sanctify themselves in an external way, by washing themselves, as after mentioned, their bodies and clothes, and by abstaining from all sensual pleasures, lawful or unlawful:

and let them wash their clothes; which the Jews understood not of their garments, but of their bodies also; teaching them by these outward things the necessity of internal purity and holiness, to appear before God: these outward rites were in use before the law of Moses, as appears from [Ge 35:2](#) and the Heathens themselves have similar notions of the cleanness of bodies and garments, as well as the purity of mind, being acceptable to their deities {n}.

{n} "Casta placent superis, pura cum veste venito". Tibullus.

Exodus 19:11

Ver. 11. **And be ready against the third day**,.... Not the third day of the month, but the third day from hence, this being the fourth, and the morrow the fifth, and the third day, the day following that, the sixth, on which day it is generally agreed by the Jews that the law was given,
See Gill on "Ex 19:16"

for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai; which must be understood, consistent with his omnipresence, and is only expressive of some visible display of his power, and of some sensible token of his presence to the people; he was now upon it in the pillar of cloud, but then he would appear in another manner, and descend in a thick cloud and fire, which all the people would see, though they could not see the similitude of anything in it.

Exodus 19:12

Ver. 12. **And thou shall set bounds to the people round about**,.... That is, round about the mountain, by drawing a line, throwing up a foss or ditch, or else by laying up heaps of stones or sand, which might be come at easily, or bushes and branches of trees, which grew thick on the mount, from whence it had its name; but be it what will that were used, these were to signify, that so far the people might go, but no further, which their curiosity might prompt them to:

saying, take heed unto yourselves that ye go not up into the mount; so far were they from being allowed to go up to the top of it, that they were not allowed to ascend it at all, or to go any further than where the ascent or rise began; it was at their peril to ascend, and this was what they were to take heed unto, lest they incurred danger:

or touch the border of it; it being the mountain of God, and relatively holy through his presence on it:

whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death; which severe law was made to deter them from any attempt to go up the mountain, since it was death even to touch it, see [Heb 12:18](#).

Exodus 19:13

Ver. 13. **There shall not a hand touch it**,.... The mountain or the border of it, which is

repeated that it might be taken notice of; and to show that it would be resented if they were to stretch out their hand and only lightly touch it, much more should they set their feet upon it and attempt to ascend it: or rather, "shall not touch him" {o}; that is, the man that shall touch the mountain; he shall be so detestable and abominable, whoever touches it or breaks through the bounds of it, and attempts to ascend it, that no man shall follow him to lay hold on him, in order to bring him back to justice, but shall dispatch him at once in one or other of the ways directed to:

but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; if near at hand, all about him shall rise upon him, and take up stones and stone him; but if he is got at a distance, then they were to shoot arrows at him; and in this way Aben Ezra interprets it; the words, says he, refer to the man that toucheth the mount, who is not to be followed and apprehended, but those that see him, and are near, abiding in the place where they are, are to stone him immediately, and if afar off they are to throw darts at him: though the Targum of Jonathan seems to understand it, as if punishment would be immediately inflicted upon such a person, not by the hands of men, but by the hand of God; for it says, such an one shall be stoned with hailstones, and fiery darts shall be spread upon him; or, as the Jerusalem Targum, shall be shot at him:

whether it be beast, or man, it shall not live; that touches the mountain, and so it is explained, [Heb 12:20](#), the word beast comprehends all kinds of beasts, wild and tame, and all sorts of cattle, of the herd or flock; as the word "man" takes in women as well as men, as Ben Gersom observes; Aben Ezra thinks fowls are not mentioned, because they cannot be taken, but fly away immediately; but then they might be shot:

when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount; this, according to Jarchi, was a trumpet of a ram's horn; the word used in the Arabic language signifying a ram; but it is a mere fancy and fable of his, that this was of the ram of Isaac which was sacrificed in his stead; it is much more likely that there was indeed no real trumpet, only a sound was formed like the sound of one; and, it is highly probable, was formed by the ministering angels; Aben Ezra observes, that the sound of a trumpet was never heard until the day of the decalogue, until the day that was given; and that there was not a greater wonder on Mount Sinai than this: the design and use of it was to gather, this vast body of people together, to come and hear what God had to say unto them; and when its sound was protracted to a great length, or was in one continued tone, and somewhat lower, as is usual when a trumpet is about to cease blowing, then the people were to take it as a token that they should approach the mountain; not to ascend it, but come to the lower and nether part of it, where bounds were set to direct them how far they might go, and no further: so the Septuagint version is,

"when the voices (or thunders) and the trumpets and the cloud departed from the mountain, they went up to the mountain:"

a certain Jewish writer {p} interprets this, not of the people in general, but of Aaron and his sons, and of the seventy elders, see [Ex 19:24](#).

{o} vb egt al "non tanget eum", Vatablus, Drusius, "non feriet eum", Tigurine version.
{p} R. Samuel Ben Hophni, apud Aben Ezram, in loc.

[Exodus 19:14](#)

Ver. 14. **And Moses went down from the mount unto the people**,.... The same day that he went up, the fourth day of the month:

and sanctified the people; instructed them and ordered them what they should do for their sanctification, in order to their hearing the law from the mouth of the Lord: **and they washed their clothes**; as the Lord had directed Moses to enjoin them, and as he had commanded them, See Gill on "Ex 19:10". Exodus 19:15Ver. 15. And he said unto the people, be ready against the third day,.... The third day from thence, the sixth of the month Sivan, against which day they were to prepare themselves, by washing their garments, and all other outward acts of sanctification and purity they were directed to, that they might be ready for the service of that day, to hear and receive the law from God himself: Aben Ezra has this note on the passage, "perhaps not a man slept that night, that he might hear the voice of the Lord in the morning, as was the way or custom of the high priest on the day of atonement;"that is, not to sleep the night before:come not at your wives; or, "do not draw nigh to a woman" {q}, to lie with her; meaning not with a strange woman, or one that was not his wife, for that was not lawful at any time; nor with a menstruous woman who was unclean, and so forbidden, but with a man's own wife: what was lawful must now be abstained from, for the greater sanctification and solemnity of the service of this day, see 1Co 7:5, so Chaeremoh {r} the stoic says of the Egyptian priests, that when the time is at hand that they are to perform some very sacred and solemn service, they spend several days in preparing for it; sometimes two and forty, sometimes more, sometimes less, but never under seven; when they abstain from all animals, and from all kind of herbs and pulse, and especially from venereal conversation with women; and to this latter Juvenal {s} the poet has respect. {q} hva la wvgt mh proselyhte gunaiki Sept. "to a woman", Ainsworth. {r} Apud Porphy, de Abstinencia, l. 4. sect. 7. Vid Clement. Alexand Stromat. l. 1. p. 306. {s} "Ille petit veniam quoties non abstinet uxor, "Concubitu, sacris observandisque diebus". Juvenal, Satyr 6. Exodus 19:16Ver. 16.

And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, &c:] The sixth of the month, according to the Targum of Jonathan, and so Jarchi; on which day, as the Jews generally say {t}, the law was given, and which, they also observe, was a sabbath day: yea, they are sometimes so very particular as to fix the hour of the day, and say {u}, it was the sixth hour of the day, or twelve o'clock at noon, that Israel received the decalogue, and at the ninth hour, at three o'clock in the afternoon, returned to their stations: there were thunders, and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount; which were to awaken the attention of the people to what they were to hear and receive, and to strike their minds with an awe of the divine Being; and to add to the solemnity of the day, and the service of it; and to signify the obscurity and terror of the legal dispensation, and the wrath and curse that the transgressors the law might expect, even an horrible tempest of divine vengeance, see Heb 12:18 and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; or, "exceeding strong" {w}; being blown by the mighty angels, and by ten thousand them, with whom the Lord now descended: so that all the people that was in the camp trembled, at the sound of it, it was so loud and terrible, and it so pierced their ears and their hearts: a different effect the Gospel trumpet the jubilee trumpet, the joyful sound of love, grace, and mercy, has upon sensible sinners, and on true believers: the law with its curses terrifies, the Gospel with its blessings comforts. {t} T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 86. 2. & Yoma, fol. 4. 2. Seder Olam Rabba, c. 5. p. 18. {u} Pirke Eliezer, c. 46. {w} dam qzx "fortis valde", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; so Ainsworth. Exodus 19:17 Ver. 17. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp,.... Which was before the mountain and near it, when the above tokens were given of the divine Presence on it; as they were thrown into a panic upon the sound of the trumpet, it was, perhaps, with some difficulty that they were brought out of the camp, or persuaded to quit it; and nothing short of the presence of Moses at the head of them, to go before them, and lead them to the foot of the mountain, could have prevailed upon them to have done it: to meet with God; who came forth in such an awful and solemn manner, as their King and lawgiver, to deliver a body of laws to them, to be the rule of their future conduct: and they stood at the nether part of the mount; at the bottom of it, where bounds were set, and a fence made, that they should proceed no further, and yet near enough to hear what God said to Moses and to them. Exodus 19:18 Ver. 18. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke,.... Not from nature, as volcanos, but for a reason after given; it seemed to be one large body of smoke, nothing else to be seen but smoke; an emblem of the darkness of the legal dispensation, which was full of obscure types and figures, of dark shadows and smoky sacrifices, to which the clear day, of the Gospel dispensation is opposed, see 2Co 3:12 because the Lord descended upon it in fire; in flaming fire, as the Targums, which set the mountain on fire, and caused this prodigious smoke; for if he, who is a consuming fire, but toucheth the hills and mountains, they smoke, Ps 104:32 and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace such an one as that which Abraham in vision saw, Ge 15:17 and the whole mount quaked greatly; to which circumstance

Deborah refers in her song, when she speaks of mountains melting and flowing from before the presence of the God of Israel, and particularly of Sinai, Jud 5:4, and the psalmist, who makes mention of the earth shaking, and the heavens dropping, and of Sinai being moved at his presence, Ps 68:8, it is probable there was an earthquake at this time, which sometimes attends thunders and lightnings, see Re 16:18. Exodus 19:19 Ver. 19. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long,.... Not in one continued tone, as before, Ex 19:13, where a different word is used, and when it decreased, and was about to cease, which was to summon the people to attend; but now they were come to the foot of the mount, and this sounding was a preparation to the giving of the law unto them, and was not one continued even tone: but waxed louder and louder; or, "going, and exceeding strong"; or, "strengthening itself exceedingly" {x}; it went on to an high pitch, until it was exceeding vehement and strong, and so sonorous as scarce to be bore: Moses spake; what he said is not here recorded; it is highly probable, as has been observed by some, that he uttered those words related of him in Heb 12:21 "I exceedingly fear and quake": such an impression did this loud and strong voice of the trumpet make upon him: and God answered him by a voice; a still and gentle one, in order to encourage and comfort him; and so the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it, "with a pleasant and audible voice, and with delightful words." {x} dam qzxw Klwh probainousai iscuroterai sfodra, Sept. "iens et fortificans se valde", Montanus; "roborans se", Vatablus; "quum pergeret et invalesceret valde", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. Exodus 19:20 Ver. 20. And the Lord came down on Mount Sinai,.... In the above visible tokens of his presence and power; otherwise he is the incomprehensible Jehovah, that immense and omnipotent Being, who fills heaven and earth, and cannot be contained and circumscribed in either: on the top of the mount; where the fire he descended in rested, and where the smoke and thick cloud were, as a token of his presence: and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount; who either was at the bottom of it with the people, or in a higher ascent of it between God and them: and Moses went up; to the top of it, where the Lord was, as he ordered him: a certain traveller {y} tells us that the top of this mount was scarce thirty feet in circumference. {y} Baumgarten Peregrinatio, l. 1. c. 24. p. 61. Exodus 19:21 Ver. 21. And the Lord said unto Moses, go down,.... As soon as he was got to the top of the mount he was bid to go down again to the bottom, with a message to the people: charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze; to see if they could observe any similitude or likeness of God, that they might have an idea of it in their minds, or make an image like unto it; to prevent which, the Lord, knowing the vanity and curiosity of their minds, ordered Moses to give them a strict charge not to transgress the bounds set them, or to break down or break through the fence of stones and sand, or hedge of bushes, brambles, and branches of trees, or whatever was placed for bounds: and many of them perish; or "fall" {z}; by the hand of God; either fall by death, or into some grievous calamity, as the men of Bethshemesh perished through looking into the ark, 1Sa 6:19. {z} lpn peswsin Sept.

"et corruant", Pagninus, Tigurine version; "et cadat", Montanus; "cadant", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius; so Ainsworth. Exodus 19:22Ver. 22. And let the priests also, which come near unto the Lord,... Either the firstborn, as the Jews generally interpret it, so Jarchi and Aben Ezra; who were sanctified to the Lord, and in whose stead afterwards the Levites were taken; or the sons of Aaron, who should be, and were potentially, though not actually priests, as Ben Gersom expresses it, from an ancient book of theirs called Mechilta; or rather some principal persons, as heads of families and the like, who, before the priesthood was settled in the family of Aaron, officiated as priests, and drew nigh to God, and offered up sacrifices for themselves and others, and were distinguished from others by this character, and therefore do not intend princes, as some interpret the word; for the description of them will not agree to them, but plainly points to a sort of men, to whom it was peculiar to perform that office. These Moses is bid to charge that they sanctify themselves; in the same manner as the people in general were before ordered, and keep themselves within the same bounds; not daring to transgress them, because they were persons that used to draw nigh to God in the performance of religious actions:lest the Lord break forth upon them; and smite them, that they die, in like manner as he made a breach on Uzzah afterwards for touching the ark of the Lord, 2Sa 6:6. Exodus 19:23Ver. 23. And Moses said unto the Lord,... Upon his giving such strict orders both with respect to the people and the priests:the people cannot come up to Mount Sinai; suggesting as if there was no need for him to go down on that account, to give them a charge not to break through and gaze; since, as he thought, there was no probability that they ever would attempt it, seeing such a solemn charge had been given, nor any possibility of it, since such a fence was made:for thou chargedst us, saying, set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it; and accordingly bounds have been set, that the people may not go up it, and the place has been declared sacred, that so none will presume to do it, according to the solemn charge that has been given: some {a} read the preceding clause by way of interrogation, "may not the people come up to Mount Sinai?" may not any of them? or, if any of them, who may? and there was the greater reason for asking such a question, since the priests that drew near to God might not, and so the next words are conceived to be an answer to it. {a} So some in Vatablus. Exodus 19:24Ver. 24. And the Lord said unto him, away, get thee down,... And prevent the people and priests from breaking through the bounds and gazing, to which their curiosity would tempt them; as the Lord knew better than Moses, and it was high time for him to be gone, the matter required haste, the people were under great temptations of indulging their curiosity, to the peril of their lives:and thou shall come up, thou, and Aaron with thee; which is thought to be an answer to the question, who might come up? only himself and Aaron, who was his prophet and spokesman, and concerned with him in his miracles, and in conducting the people of Israel; and who was to be chief priest as Moses was to be, and was the leader and governor of the people:but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the Lord, lest he break forth

upon them; it required the immediate presence of Moses below, and immediate care was to be taken by him, lest the priests and people, led by a vain curiosity, should attempt to ascend the mount, and come where God was, to see if they could observe any likeness of him; which would so provoke him, that in just retaliation, as they had broke through the bounds set, he would break forth on them by inflicting sudden death upon them. Exodus 19:25 Ver. 25. So Moses went down to the people,.... As the Lord commanded him: and spake unto them: charging them to keep their distance, and not presume to pass the line he had drawn, or the foss or fence he had made: in the Jerusalem Targum it is added, "come and receive the ten words;" the decalogue or ten commands; and the Targum of Jonathan, "come and receive the law with the ten words;" the ten commandments of the law, which are delivered in the following chapter.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 20:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 20

In this chapter we have an account of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai; the preface to it, [Ex 20:1](#), the ten commandments it consists of, [Ex 20:8](#), the circumstances attending it, which caused the people to remove at some distance, [Ex 20:18](#), when they desired of Moses, that he would speak to them and not God, who bid them not fear, since this was for the trial of them; but still they kept at a distance, while Moses drew nigh to God,

[Ex 20:19](#) who ordered him to caution the children of Israel against idolatry, and directed what sort of an altar he would have made whereon to offer their sacrifices, promising that where his name was recorded he would grant his presence and blessing, [Ex 20:22](#).

Ver. 1. **And God spake all these words**,.... Which follow, commonly called the decalogue, or ten commands; a system or body of laws, selected and adapted to the case and circumstances of the people of Israel; striking at such sins as they were most addicted to, and they were under the greatest temptation of falling into the commission of; to prevent which, the observation of these laws was enjoined them; not but that whatsoever of them is of a moral nature, as for the most part they are, are binding on all mankind, and to be observed both by Jew and Gentile; and are the best and shortest compendium of morality that ever was delivered out, except the abridgment of them by our Lord, [Mt 22:36](#), the ancient Jews had a notion, and which Jarchi delivers as his own, that these words were spoken by God in one word; which is not to be understood grammatically; but that those laws are so closely compacted and united together as if they were but one word, and are not to be detached and separated from each other; hence, as the Apostle James says, whosoever offends in one point is guilty of all, [Jas 2:10](#), and if this notion was as early as the first times of the Gospel, one would be tempted to think the Apostle Paul had reference to it, [Ro 13:9](#) though indeed he seems to have respect only to the second table of the law; these words were spoke in an authoritative way as commands, requiring not only attention but obedience to them; and they were spoken by God himself in the hearing of all the people of Israel; and were not, as Aben Ezra observes, spoken by a mediator or middle person, for as yet they had not desired one; nor by an angel or angels, as the following words show, though the law is said to be spoken by angels, to be ordained by them, in the hands of a mediator, and given by the disposition of them, which perhaps was afterwards done, see [Ac 7:53](#).

See Gill on "Ac 7:53".

See Gill on "Ga 3:19".
See Gill on "Heb 2:2".

saying; as follows.

Exodus 20:2

Ver. 2. **I am the Lord thy God**,.... This verse does not contain the first of these commands, but is a preface to them, showing that God had a right to enact and enjoin the people of Israel laws; and that they were under obligation to attend unto them with reverence, and cheerfully obey them, since he was the Lord, the eternal and immutable Jehovah, the Being of beings, who gives being to all creatures, and gave them theirs, and therefore had a right to give them what laws he pleased; and he was their God, their covenant God, in a special and peculiar manner, their King and their God, they being a Theocracy, and so more immediately under his government, and therefore had laws given them preferable to what any other people had:

which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt: where they had been afflicted many years, and reduced to great distress, but were brought forth with an high hand, and with great riches, and in a very wonderful and miraculous manner; so that they were under great obligations to yield a ready and cheerful obedience to the will of God:

out of the house of bondage: or "servants" {b}; that is, where they had been servants and slaves, but now were made free, and were become a body politic, a kingdom of themselves, under their Lord, King, Lawgiver, and Saviour, Jehovah himself, and therefore to be governed by laws of his enacting; and this shows that this body of laws was delivered out to the people of Israel, and primarily belong to them; for of no other can the above things be said.

{b} Mydbe "servorum", Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

Exodus 20:3

Ver. 3. **Thou shalt have no other gods before me**. This is the first command, and is opposed to the polytheism of the Gentiles, the Egyptians, from whom Israel was just come, and whose gods some of them might have had a favourable opinion of and liking to, and had committed idolatry with; and the Canaanites, into whose land they were going; and to prevent their joining with them in the worship of other gods, this

law was given, as well as to be of standing us to them in all generations; for there is but one only living and true God, the former and maker of all things, who only is to be had, owned, acknowledged, served, and worshipped as such; all others have only the name, and are not by nature gods; they are other gods than the true God is; they are not real, but fictitious deities; they are other or strange gods to the worshippers of them, that cry unto them, for they do not answer them, as Jarchi observes: and now for Israel, who knew the true God, who had appeared unto them, and made himself known to them by his name Jehovah, both by his word and works, whom he had espoused to himself as a choice virgin, to commit idolatry, which is spiritual adultery with other gods, with strange gods, that are no gods, and this before God, in the presence of him, who had took them by the hand when he brought them out of Egypt, and had been a husband to them, must be shocking impiety, monstrous ingratitude, and extremely displeasing to God, and resented by him; and is, as many observe, as if a woman should commit adultery in the presence of her husband, and so the phrase may denote the audaciousness of the action, as well as the wickedness of it; though, as Ben Melech from others observes, if it was done in secret it would be before the Lord, who is the omniscient God, and nothing can be hid from him: several Jewish commentators, as Jarchi, Kimchi, and Aben Ezra, interpret the phrase "before me", all the time I endure, while I have a being, as long as I live, or am the living God, no others are to be had; that is, they are never to be had; since the true God will always exist: the Septuagint version is, "besides me", no other were to be worshipped with him; God will have no rivals and competitors; though he was worshipped, yet if others were worshipped with him, if others were set before him and worshipped along with him, or it was pretended he was worshipped in them, and even he with a superior and they with an inferior kind of worship; yet this was what he could by no means admit of: the phrase may be rendered "against me" {c}; other gods opposition to him, against his will, contrary to obedience due to him and his precepts: this law, though it supposes and strongly inculcates the unity of the divine Being, the only object of religious adoration, yet does not oppose the doctrine of the trinity of persons in the Godhead; nor is that any contradiction to it, since though the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, there are not three Gods, but three Persons, and these three are one God, [1Jo 5:7](#).

{c} ynp le "contra me", Noldius, No. 1801. p. 731.

[Exodus 20:4](#)

Ver. 4. **Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image**,.... An image of anything graven by art or man's device, cut out of wood of stone, and so anything that was molten, or cast into a mould or form, engraved by men, and this in order to be

worshipped; for otherwise images of things might be made for other uses and purposes, as the cherubim over the mercy seat, and the brazen serpent, and images and impressions on coin, which we do not find the Jews themselves scrupled to make use of in Christ's time on that account; though they vehemently opposed the setting up any images of the Caesars or emperors in their temple, because they seemed to be placed there as deities, and had a show of religious worship: however, any image of God was not to be made at all, since no similitude was ever seen of him, or any likeness could be conceived; and it must be a gross piece of ignorance, madness, and impudence, to pretend to make one, and great impiety to make it in order to be the object of religious worship; on which account, not any image or the image of anything whatever was to be made:

or any likeness [of anything] that is in heaven above; any form, figure, portrait, or picture of anything or creature whatever, whether in the supreme, starry, or airy heaven; as of angels, which some have gone into the worship of; and of the sun, moon, and stars, the host of heaven; and of any of the birds of the air, as the hawk by the Egyptians, and the dove by the Assyrians:

or that is in the earth beneath; as oxen, sheep, goats, cats, dogs, &c. such as were the gods of Egypt:

or that is in the water under the earth: as of fishes, such as were the crocodile of Egypt, the Dagon of the Philistines, and the Derceto of the Syrians: this is the second command, as the Targum of Jonathan expressly calls it; that is, the first part of it, which forbids the making of graven images for worship; the other part follows, which is the worship of them itself: Clemens of Alexandria {d} observes, that Numa, king of the Romans, took this from Moses, and forbid the Romans to make any image of God, like to man or beast.

{d} Stromat. l. 1. p. 304.

Exodus 20:5

Ver. 5. **Thou shall not bow down thyself to them**,.... Perform any worship to them, show any reverence of them by any gesture of the body; one being mentioned, bowing the body, and put for all others, as prostration of it to the earth, bending the knee, kissing the hand, lifting up of hands or eyes to them, or by any outward action expressing a religious esteem of them, as if there was divinity in them:

nor serve them; in a religious manner, internally or externally, by offering sacrifice

and burning incense to them; by praying to, or praising of them; by expressing love to them, faith and trust in them, hope and expectation of good things from them, and the like. The reason of this second command, relating to the making and worshipping of images, next follows:

for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God; jealous of his own honour and glory, and will not give it to another; even to graven images, nor suffer it to be given to them without resenting it; and jealousy is fierce and cruel, and breaks forth into great wrath, and issues in dreadful scenes oftentimes among men; as a man that has reason to be jealous of his wife, and especially if he takes her and the adulterer in the fact, it often costs them both their lives, being so enraged at such an insult upon him, and such a violation of the marriage bed; and thus the great Jehovah, the God of Israel, their head and husband, is represented, in order to deter from idolatry, or spiritual adultery, than which nothing could be more provoking to him:

visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children; meaning chiefly, if not solely, the iniquity of idolatry; which being such an insult on his honour, "crimen laesae majestatis", is treated by him as high treason is among men; not only he punishes the authors and perpetrators of it in their own persons, which is meant by "visiting", but upon their children also, which are parts of themselves; and whatsoever is inflicted on them is the same as on themselves, and is an addition to, and a sensible aggravation of their punishment; and especially these are visited in such a manner, when they tread in their father's steps, and fill up the measure of their iniquity. So the Targum of Jonathan,

"visiting the iniquity of ungodly fathers on rebellious children:"

unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; as all idolaters must be thought to do, whatsoever love and affection they may pretend to God, by worshipping idols before him, besides him, along with him, or him in them: "the third and fourth generation" are mentioned, because sometimes parents lived to see these, and so with their eyes beheld the punishment inflicted upon their posterity for their sins, which must be distressing to them; or, however, these being but small removes from them, might impress their minds and affect them, to think what their sins would bring upon their descendants, who would quickly come after them, and share in the sad effects of their iniquities, and so be a means to deter them from them.

[Exodus 20:6](#)

Ver. 6. **And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me,**.... And show their

love by worshipping God, and him only, by serving him acceptably with reverence and godly fear, by a cheerful obedience to all his commands, by all religious exercises, both internal and external, as follows:

and keep my commandments; not only this, but all others; for keeping these from right principles, and with right views, is an instance and evidence of love to God, see [Joh 14:15](#) and to such persons he shows mercy and kindness, performs acts of grace, and bestows on them blessings of goodness; and indeed it is owing to his own grace, mercy, and kindness to them, that they do love him, and from a principle of love observe his precepts; and this is shown to thousands, to multitudes, who are blessed with such grace as to love the Lord, and keep his commandments: though rather this is to be understood of a thousand generations, and not persons, and should have been supplied, as in the preceding verse, "unto a thousand generations", God being more abundant in showing mercy, and exercising grace and goodness, than he is rigorous in inflicting punishment.

Exodus 20:7

Ver. 7. **Thou shall not take the name of the Lord God in vain**,.... Make use of the name Lord or God, or any other name and epithet of the divine Being, in a light and trifling way, without any show of reverence of him, and affection to him; whereas the name of God ought never to be mentioned but in a grave and serious manner, and with an awe of the greatness of his majesty upon the mind. The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan restrain this to swearing by the name of the Lord; and so the Jewish writers generally interpret it either of swearing lightly, rashly, or falsely; and to this it may very well be extended, though not limited; and so forbids, as all profane oaths; imprecations, and curses by the name of God, which the mouths of wicked men are full of, so swearing by it in matters trivial, and of no importance; for swearing even by the name of the Lord ought not to be used but in matters of moment and consequence, for the confirmation of a thing, and putting an end to strife, and where a matter cannot be determined and decided without an appeal to God. And great care should be taken that a man swears to that which is true, and not false; for false swearing, or perjury, is a very grievous sin, and as it is strictly forbidden, it is severely punished by the Lord, as follows; see [Le 19:12](#), this is the third command, and the reason enforcing it follows:

for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name is vain; will not look upon him as an innocent person, and treat him as such; will not acquit and discharge him as just and righteous; but on the contrary will consider him as a guilty person, a profaner of his name, and a transgressor of his law, and will condemn and punish him, if not in

this world, yet in the world to come; and so the Targum of Jonathan, by way of explanation, adds,

"in the day of the great judgment;"

see [Mal 3:5](#).

[Exodus 20:8](#)

Ver. 8. **Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.** By abstaining from all servile work and business, and from all pleasures and recreations lawful on other days, and by spending it in religious exercises, both internal and external. This the Israelites are bid to "remember", by observing it in such a manner, because this command had been given them before at the first time the manna was rained about their tents, [Ex 16:23](#) and because it was a command of positive institution, and not a part of the law of nature, and therefore more liable to be forgotten and neglected; for, as a Jewish writer {e} observes, all the laws of the decalogue are according to the dictates of nature, the law and light of reason, and knowledge of men, excepting this: wherefore no other has this word "remember" prefixed to it; there being somewhat in the light of every man's reason and conscience to direct and engage him in some measure to the observation of them. In what day of the week this sabbath was to be kept next follows; for all to the end of the eleventh verse belongs to this command, which is the fourth.

{e} Aben Ezra.

[Exodus 20:9](#)

Ver. 9. **Six days shalt thou labour,**.... This is not to be taken for a precept, but a permission; not as a command enjoining men to work and labour with their hands, to provide for themselves and families things useful and necessary, and honest in the sight of God; but as a grant and allowance of so many days to employ themselves in, for their own profit and advantage, and that of their families; the Lord only reserving one day out of seven for his service, which ought to be looked upon as a singular favour, that he required no more of their time for his use, and the rest they might spend as they pleased, so that they did not indulge themselves in sin. It is required indeed of all men to labour in some sort and way or another, with their heads or with their hands; though all are not obliged to labour in the same way, or to the same degree, for he that will not work ought not to eat; but this law is not an injunction of that kind, only a toleration of labour on the six days of the week, if proper and

necessary, when it is forbidden on the seventh:

and do all thy work, which is incumbent on a man, he is called unto, and is necessary to be done for the good of him and his family; particularly care should be taken, that all should be done on the six days that could possibly be done, and nothing left to be done on the seventh.

Exodus 20:10

Ver. 10. **But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God**,.... Not which he rested on, and ceased from the works of creation in, though he did rest on the seventh day of the creation, and so on every other day since, as well as that; nor does it appear, nor can it be proved, that this day appointed to the Jews as a sabbath was the seventh day of the week from the creation of the world; but was either the seventh day of the week from their coming out of Egypt, or from the raining of the manna: but this is called the Lord's sabbath, or rest, because enjoined by him to the people of Israel, and not to them until they were separated from other people, and were a distinct body of men under a certain meridian; for it is impossible that one and the same day, be it the seventh, or any other, should be kept to exactness of time by all the inhabitants of the earth; it being night with one part, when it is day with another, and not the same day to them all:

in it thou shall not do any work; of a servile nature, exercise any trade or any hand labour, or any kind of work for pleasure or profit, only works of mercy and necessity. No labour or handicraft was to be exercised, according to the Jewish canons {f}, until the going out of it, or the appearance of the stars:

thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter; neither a man nor his children, male and female, such as were under age, and under the tuition, direction, and care of their parents, who were to instruct them in this kind, and not suffer them to work on this day, and much less oblige them to it; for as for those that were grown up, and no longer under the inspection of parents, and were heads of families themselves, they are included in the word "thou", and are in the first place charged in this command;

thy manservant, nor thy maidservant; this is to be understood, according to the Jews, not of hired servants, concerning whose rest from labour a man was not bound {g}, but of such as were born in their house, and bought with their money; and of such menservants as were circumcised, and in all things professed to be proselytes to the Jewish religion, and to conform to it; for as for one that only received the commands of the sons of Noah, and was not circumcised, he might do work for himself on the

sabbath day, but not for his master; and no Israelite might bid him work on the sabbath day for the necessity of an Israelite, though he was not his master {h}. If a servant does work without the knowledge of his master, and it is known to all that he does it without his knowledge, there is no need to separate him from it, or take him off of it {i}: so maidservants, when they did things without the knowledge of their masters and mistresses, and without being bid to do it, they were free to do it: thus, for instance, they say {k},

"a cheese which maids make of themselves, of milk that belongs to an Israelite, is lawful when he does not bid them make it:"

nor thy cattle, of any sort whatever that is used to labour, because if the cattle did not rest, servants could not, who are concerned in the care and use of them: in [De 5:14](#), the ox and the ass are particularly mentioned, because laborious creatures; the one were used in ploughing, and treading out the corn, and the other to ride upon, and carry burdens; and concerning the latter the Jews have this canon {l},

"he who is going in the way, (or on a journey,) and has sanctified for himself the day, and has money with him, and has an ass; and though he has with him an idolater, he may not put his bag upon his ass; because he is commanded concerning its rest; but he may give his bag to the idolater to throw it upon it; and at the going out of the sabbath he may receive it from him, and even may not give him a reward for it;"

but not only those, but all sorts of cattle were exempt from labour on this day, as horses, camels, mules, &c. which, according to the Jewish canons, as they were not to be employed in work by the Jews, so they were not to be let or lent out to an idolater {m}: nor the stranger that is within thy gates: who was a proselyte of the gate, and not of righteousness; as for the proselyte of righteousness that was circumcised, and professed the Jewish religion, about him there could be no doubt concerning his rest on this day; but the proselyte of the gate, his case was not so clear, and therefore is particularly expressed; and by which description it should seem that he was not obliged by this law, had he not been within their gates, or a sojourner in anyone of their cities; since it was contrary to the laws and usages among whom they dwelt, and might be an offence to some, and a snare to others, and, as Grotius thinks, might be to their detriment, get their work and their gain from them, they are forbid to work; and yet, according to the Jewish writers {n}, they might work for themselves, though not for an Israelite, as before observed.

{f} Schulchan Aruch, par. 1. Orach Chayim Hilchot Sabbat, c. 293. sect. 2, 3. {g} Lebush, par. 1. c. 304. sect. 1. {h} Schulchan Aruch, ib. c. 304, sect. 1. {i} Lebush, ib. {k} Schulchan, ib. c. 305. sect. 21. {l} Ib. c. 266. sect. 1. {m} Ib. c. 246. sect. 3. {n}

Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 20. sect. 14.

Exodus 20:11

Ver. 11. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, &c] And of which six days, and of the several things made in each of them, see the notes on the first chapter of Genesis:

and resteth the seventh day: which does not suppose labour, attended with weariness and fatigue; for the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary, [Isa 40:28](#) nor ease and refreshment from it, but only a cessation from the works of creation, they being finished and completed, though not from the works of Providence, in which he is continually concerned: now this circumstance, before recorded in the history of the creation, is wisely improved to engage an attention to this command, and to the observation of it; there being an analogy between the one and the other, that as God worked six days, and, having done his work completely, ceased from it and rested, so it was fit and proper, that as the Israelites had six days allowed them to labour in, and do all their work, they should rest on the seventh, they and all that belonged to them, or had any connection with them:

wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath, and hallowed it: he separated it from all other days of the week, and set it apart for holy use and service, by obliging his people to cease from all work on it, and to give up themselves to the exercises of religion, as hearing, reading the word, prayer, praise, &c. and he blessed it with his presence, and with the communications of his grace, as he still continues to do, whatsoever day his people make use of for his worship and service. The note of Jarchi is,

"he blessed it with manna, by giving double bread on the sixth, and sanctified it by manna, that it might not descend on it;"

so that there was a provision made for it, which was blessing it; and it was distinguished from all other days, no manna falling on it, which was the sanctification of it; and all showed it to be a day the Lord had a particular regard to, and that it was to be a day of rest, and exemption from labour.

(This verse shows that the days in the first chapter of Genesis were real twenty four hour days. For you compare like things to like. Just as God worked six days and rested on the seventh, so the Israelites were to do also. The comparison would make no sense if the days were "seven ages" or were "seven ages" that overlapped each other (Day Age Theory) or if there was a huge gap between the days (Gap Theory). These are

modern compromises to accommodate the alleged geological ages with the Biblical account of creation.

Further this verse allows one to determine the age of the universe. Using the biblical genealogies Bishop Ussher determined the date of creation to be 4004 B.C. Although this may be off by one or two percent, it is a very accurate estimate based on biblical revelation not man's speculation. Editor.)

[Exodus 20:12](#)

Ver. 12. Honour thy father and thy mother, &c] Which is the fifth commandment of the decalogue, but is the first commandment with promise, as the apostle says, [Eph 6:2](#) and is the first of the second table: this, though it may be extended to all ancestors in the ascending line, as father's father and mother, mother's father and mother, &c. and to all such who are in the room of parents, as step-fathers and step-mothers, guardians, nurses, &c. and to all superiors in dignity and office, to kings and governors, to masters, ministers, and magistrates; yet chiefly respects immediate parents, both father and mother, by showing filial affection for them, and reverence and esteem of them, and by yielding obedience to them, and giving them relief and assistance in all things in which they need it; and if honour, esteem, affection, obedience, and reverence, are to be given to earthly parents, then much more to our Father which is in heaven, [Mal 1:6](#)

that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee; that is, the land of Canaan, which he had given by promise to their fathers, and was now about to put them, their posterity, into the possession of: this further confirms the observation made, that this body of laws belonged peculiarly to the people of Israel: long life in any place or land is a blessing in itself, not always enjoyed by obedient children, though obedience to parents often brings the judgments of God on persons; so that they sometimes die an untimely or an uncommon death, as in the case of the rebellious son, for whom a law was provided in Israel, and Absalom and others, see [Le 20:9](#) Aben Ezra takes the word to be transitive, and so the words may be read, "that they may prolong thy days"; or, "cause thy days to be prolonged"; meaning either that the commandments, and keeping of them, may be the means of prolonging the days of obedient children, according to the divine promise; or that they, their father and mother, whom they harbour and obey, might, by their prayers for them, be the means of obtaining long life for them; or else that they, Father, Son, and Spirit, may do it, though man's days, strictly speaking, cannot be shortened or lengthened beyond the purpose of God, see [Job 14:5](#) the Septuagint version inserts before this clause another, "that it may be well with thee", as in [De 5:16](#) and which the apostle also has, [Eph 6:3](#)

and where, instead of this, the words are, "and thou mayest live long on the earth"; accommodating them the better to the Gentiles, to whom he writes.

[Exodus 20:13](#)

Ver. 13. **Thou shalt not kill.** Not meaning any sort of creatures, for there are some to be killed for the food and nourishment of men, and others for their safety and preservation; but rational creatures, men, women, and children, any of the human species, of every age, sex, condition, or nation; no man has a right to take away his own life, or the life of another; by this law is forbidden suicide, or self-murder, parricide or murder of parents, homicide or the murder of man; yet killing of men in lawful war, or in defence of a man's self, when his own life is in danger, or the execution of malefactors by the hands or order of the civil magistrate, and killing a man at unawares, without any design, are not to be reckoned breaches of this law; but taking away the life of another through private malice and revenge, and even stabbing of a man's character, and so all things tending to or designed for the taking away of life, and all plots, conspiracies, and contrivances for that purpose, even all sinful anger, undue wrath and envy, rancour of all mind, all malice in thought, word, or deed, are contrary to this precept, see [Mt 5:21](#) and which, on the other hand, requires that men should do all they can for the ease, peace, and preservation of the lives of men: this is the sixth command, but, in the Septuagint, the strict order in which this and the two following precepts lie is not observed, rehearsing them thus, "thou shall not commit adultery, thou shall not steal, thou shall not kill"; and so in [Mr 10:19](#) the order is inverted.

[Exodus 20:14](#)

Ver. 14. **Thou shall not commit adultery,**] Which, strictly speaking, is only that sin which is committed with another man's wife, as Jarchi observes; but Aben Ezra thinks the word here used signifies the same as another more commonly used for whoredom and fornication; and no doubt but fornication is here included, which, though it was not reckoned a crime among some Heathens, is within the reach of this law, and forbidden by it, it being an impure action, and against a man's body, as the apostle says, [1Co 6:18](#) as well as sins of a more enormous kind, as unnatural lusts and copulations, such as incest, sodomy, bestiality, &c. and even all unchaste thoughts, desires, and affections, obscene words, and impure motions and gestures of the body, and whatever is in itself unclean or tends to uncleanness; as it also requires that we should, as much as in us lies, do all we can to preserve our chastity, and the chastity of others, pure and inviolate, see [Mt 5:28](#), this is the seventh commandment.

[Exodus 20:15](#)

Ver. 15. **Thou shall not steal.** Which is to take away another man's property by force or fraud, without the knowledge, and against the will of the owner thereof. Thefts are of various kinds; there is private theft, picking of pockets, shoplifting, burglary, or breaking into houses in the night, and carrying off goods; public theft, or robbing upon the highways; domestic theft, as when wives take away their husbands' money or goods, and conceal them, or dispose of them without their knowledge and will, children rob their parents, and servants purloin their masters' effects; ecclesiastical theft or sacrilege, and personal theft, as stealing of men and making slaves of them, selling them against their wills; and Jarchi thinks that this is what the Scripture speaks of when it uses this phrase; but though this may be included, it may not be restrained to this particular, since, besides what have been observed, there are many other things that may be reduced to it and are breaches of it; as all overreaching and circumventing in trade and commerce, unjust contracts, not making good and performing payments, detention of servants' wages, unlawful usury, unfaithfulness with respect to anything deposited in a man's hands, advising and encouraging thieves, and receiving from them: the case of the Israelites borrowing of the Egyptians and spoiling them is not to be objected to this law, since that was by the command of God, and was only taking what was due to them for service; however, by this command God let the Israelites know that that was a peculiar case, and not to be drawn into an example, and that they were in other cases not to take away another man's property; and so the case of an hungry man's stealing to satisfy nature is not observed as lawful and laudable, but as what is connived at and indulged, [Pr 6:30](#), this law obliges to preserve and secure every man's property to himself, as much as in men lies: this is the eighth commandment.

[Exodus 20:16](#)

Ver. 16. **Thou shall not bear false witness against thy neighbour.** Neither publicly in a court of judicature, by laying things to his charge that are false, and swearing to them, to his hurt and damage; nor privately, by whispering, tale bearing, backbiting, slandering, by telling lies of him, traducing his character by innuendos, sly insinuations, and evil suggestions, whereby he may suffer in his character, credit, and reputation, and in his trade and business; Aben Ezra thinks the words describe the character of the person that is not to bear witness in any court, and to be read thus, "thou shall not answer who art a false witness": or, "O thou false witness": meaning that such an one should not be admitted an evidence in court, who had been convicted

already of being a false witness; his word and oath are not to be taken, nor should any questions be put to him, or he suffered to answer to any; his depositions should have no weight with those before whom they were made, nay, even they should not be taken, nor such a person be allowed to make any; but this is to put this precept in a quite different form from all the rest, and without any necessity, since the word may as well be taken for a testimony bore, as for the person that bears it: this is the ninth commandment.

Exodus 20:17

Ver. 17. **Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house**,.... This is the tenth and last commandment, and is an explanation of several of the past; showing that the law of God not only forbids external acts of sin, but the inward and first motions of the mind to it, which are not known, and would not be thought to be sinful, were it not for this law; nor are they known by this law until the Spirit of God by it convinces men of them, in whose light they see them to be sinful; even not only the schemes and contrivances of sin in the mind, the imaginations of it, thoughts dwelling upon it with pleasure, but even the first risings of sin in the heart; and such motions of it which are not assented unto, and unawares spring up from the corruption of nature, and are sudden craving desires after unlawful things, even these are forbidden by this law; which shows the spirituality of the law of God, and the impossibility of its being perfectly kept by fallen men. The apostle has reference to it, [Ro 7:7](#). Several particulars are here mentioned not to be coveted, as instances and examples instead of others. Thus, for instance, "a neighbour's house" is not to be coveted; "nor his field", as the Septuagint version here adds, agreeably to [De 5:21](#), a man is not secretly to wish and desire that such a man's house or land were his, since this arises from a discontent of mind with respect to his own habitation and possessions; and a man should be content with such things as he has, and not covet another's, which is not without sin:

thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife: and wish she was thine, and lust after her; this is a breach of the seventh command, and serves to explain and illustrate that. This clause stands first in the Septuagint version, as it does in [De 5:21](#),

nor his manservant, nor maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbours'; which, with the first clause, serve to explain the eighth command, showing that we are not only forbid to take away what is another man's property, any of the goods here mentioned, or any other, but we are not secretly to desire them, and wish they were in our possession; since it discovers uneasiness and dissatisfaction with our own lot and portion, and is coveting another man's property, which is

coveting an evil covetousness.

Exodus 20:18

Ver. 18. **And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings,**.... That is, they heard the one, and saw the other; they heard the dreadful volleys of thunder, and saw the amazing flashes of lightning, which were like lamps and torches, as the word used signifies; by a communication of senses, one sense is put for another, and the sense of sight being the principal, as Ben Melech observes, it is put for the rest, and so in the following. It is an observation of Austin's {o} that to "see" is used of all of the five senses, seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and feeling:

and the noise the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: they the sound of the trumpet, which made them tremble and saw the mountain all in a smoke, which made it look very terrible. Though the words may be rendered, as they are by some, "they perceived the thunders", &c. {p}; had a sensible perception of them with their eyes ears, which greatly affected them, and made strong impressions upon their minds, and filled them with fear and dread:

and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off; their minds were not only terrified and distressed, and their bodies shook with fear; but they could not stand their ground, but were obliged to retreat, who but just before were curious to draw near, and gaze and see what they could, to prevent which bounds were set; but now these were needless, what they saw and heard were sufficient to keep them at a distance, nay, obliged them to quit their places; they were at the lower part of the mount before, and now they removed a good way from it, even to their camp, and to their tents in it, see [De 5:30](#). The Targum of Jonathan says, they removed twelve miles; and so Jarchi, who observes, that this was according to the length of their camp.

{o} Confess. l. 10. c. 35. {p} Myar "percipiebant", Junius & Tremellius, "intelligebant"; so some in Drusius.

Exodus 20:19

Ver. 19. **And they said unto Moses,**.... Who was now come down from the mountain, and to whom the heads of the tribes and elders of the people came from the camp, and out of their tents, by whom the people said to him, as follows, see [De 5:23](#),

speak thou with us, and we will hear; their request is, that whatsoever it was the will

and pleasure of God to declare to them, that he would communicate it to Moses, and he deliver it to them, promising that they would hearken to it, and obey it, as if they had heard it from the mouth of God himself:but let not God speak with us, lest we die; pray to him, that he would not speak immediately, but by a mediator, which they now saw the need of; that there was no drawing nigh to God, nor hearing nor receiving anything from him without one; that his law, as it came from him to them sinful creatures, was a killing letter, and the ministration of condemnation and death, and injected such terror into their minds, that if it was continued they must die under it: thus, as the apostle observes, when "they heard the voice of words, entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more, for they could not endure that which was commanded", Heb 12:19. Exodus 20:20Ver. 20. And Moses said unto the people,.... By representatives and messengers, the heads of the tribes and elders:fear not; be not afraid of God with a slavish fear; be not afraid of the thunders and lightnings, as if they were like one of the plagues of Egypt, which terrified Pharaoh and his people; be not afraid of being consumed by them, they will do you no hurt; be not afraid of dying by the hand of God, at his presence, and through the voice of his words spoken to you; be of good courage, for the design of God is not to destroy you, but to instruct you, and do you good:for God is come to prove you; whether, being now freed by him from Egyptian bondage, they would take and own him for their King, and be subject to his laws and government; whether they would abide by what they had said, all that the Lord hath spoken will we do, Ex 19:8, whether they thought they had purity and righteousness enough to answer to the divine law, and whether they imagined they had strength enough to fulfil it, and whether they needed a mediator between God and them or not: some Jewish writers {q} give a different sense of this clause, as if the coming of God to them in this grand and majestic manner was to exalt them, and make them great and honourable among the nations of the world; taking the word used to be derived from a root, which signifies to lift up, as a banner or ensign is lifted up on high: but the former sense is best;and that his fear may be before your faces; not a slavish fear of death, of wrath, and damnation, before dehorted from; but a reverence of the divine Majesty, an awe of his greatness and glory, a serious regard to his commands, delivered in so grand a manner, and a carefulness to offend him by disobeying them:that ye sin not: by breaking the law, and transgressing the precepts of it, which they might be deterred from, as it might be reasonably thought, when they reflected with what solemnity, and in what an awful manner it was delivered to them. {q} Jarchi in loc. Medrash apud Kimchi in Sepher Shorash. rad. hog & Ben Melech in loc. Exodus 20:21Ver. 21. And the people stood afar off,.... Still kept their distance in their camp and tents; or the heads and elders of the people having had this conversation with Moses, returned to their tents as they were bid, De 5:30 and to the people in the camp, and there they continued while Moses went up to God with their request:and Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was; the thick cloud, Ex 19:9 as Jarchi interprets it, and who observes

from their doctors that there were three enclosures about the divine Majesty, darkness, a cloud, and thick darkness; and so Moses passed through the darkness, and the cloud, to the thick darkness where Jehovah was, and where he is said to dwell when the temple was built, 1Ki 8:8 and they have an observation that the word rendered "drew near" is transitive, and should be translated, "he was brought near" or, "made to draw nigh"; Michael and Gabriel being sent to him, took hold of his hands and brought him against his will unto the thick darkness {r}; but if the word will admit of such a version, the sense is either that he was caused to draw near through the importunity of the people; or rather through the call of God to him, or an impulse of his upon his mind, which obliged him to it. {r} Pirke Eliezer, c. 41. Exodus 20:22Ver. 22. And the Lord said unto Moses,.... When Moses was come near the thick darkness where God was:thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel; at his return unto them, and which he was to deliver in the name of God, and as his words:ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven; descending from heaven on Mount Sinai in a cloud and fire, he talked with them out of the cloud and fire, and delivered to them with an audible voice the above ten commands; the cloud and fire they saw with their eyes, and the words expressed from thence they heard with their ears; or heaven may mean the air on the top of Sinai, from whence Jehovah spoke. Exodus 20:23Ver. 23. Ye shall not make with me,.... This is a proposition of itself, as appears by the accent Athnach placed at the end of it, which divides it from the following, and therefore "gods of silver" belong to the next clause or proposition; something seems to be wanting to complete the sense, which the Talmudists {s} and Jarchi after them supply thus,"ye shall not make with me as the likeness of my ministers which minister before me on high;"as the seraphim, ministering angels, &c. as the sun, moon, and stars; and so the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases the words,"ye shall not make, to worship, the likeness of the sun, and of the moon, and of the stars, and of the planets, and of the angels that minister before me:"or rather, "ye shall not make any likeness with me", or any likeness of me; and so the words stand connected with the preceding verse, that since they only saw the cloud and fire, and perceived the voice of God from thence, but saw no likeness or similitude of him, therefore they were not to make any under a pretence of worshipping him with it, or in it, or by it; and so Ben Melech adds, by way of explanation, although your intention is to my service: "gods of silver and gods of gold ye shall not make unto you"; for so this clause is to be read: that is, images made of gold and silver, images of angels, or of the host of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, or of great men on earth, as kings or heroes, or of any creature in heaven, earth, or sea; these they were not to make unto them, in order to serve and worship them, or to worship God in them, or by them, or with them: the first images for idolatrous worship were made of gold and silver, because, being rich and glittering, they more affected the minds of the people, as the golden calf a little after made, and perhaps the gods of Egypt were such, at least some of them; wherefore this law against idolatry is repeated, because the people of Israel were prone unto it, and many of them had been

ensnared with it in Egypt, upon every occasion were ready to relapse into it: or images made of meaner materials, as brass, wood, and stone, though not mentioned, are equally forbidden; for if those of richer materials were not to be made and worshipped, much less those of baser ones. {s} T. Bab. Roshhashanah, fol. 24. 1. 2. Avoda Zara, fol, 43. 1. 2. Exodus 20:24 Ver. 24. An altar of earth thou shall make unto me,.... This was a temporary precept, and only in force until the tabernacle was built, and respects occasional altars, erected while on their travels, and were to be made of turfs of earth, and so easily and quickly thrown up, as their case and circumstances required, and as easily thrown down, as it was proper they should, after they had no more use for them, lest they should be abused to superstitious uses; for afterwards the altar for burnt offerings was made of Shittim wood covered with brass, and that in the temple was wholly a brazen one, Ex 27:1 this precept seems to suggest the plainness and simplicity in which God would be worshipped, in opposition to the pomp and gaudy show of idolaters intimated in the preceding verse; though Tertullian {t} relates of the Romans in the times of Numa Pompilius, that they had neither images, nor temples, nor capitols, only altars made of turfs of earth hastily thrown up; and this altar of earth might be, as Ainsworth observes, a figure of the earthly or human nature of Christ, who is the altar, whereof believers in him have a right to eat, Heb 13:10 and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen; which were the creatures offered in the said sacrifices, as also in the sin offerings and trespass offerings, which, though not mentioned, are included: in all places where I record my name; or, "cause it to be mentioned", or "remembered" {u}; where he manifested himself, displayed the glory of his nature and perfection; or, as the Targum of Jonathan expresses it, caused his Shechinah or divine Majesty to dwell, or gave any intimations of his presence, as at the altar now erected to him, and at the sacrifices offered up thereon, and afterwards in the tabernacle, between the cherubim over the mercy seat, and ark of the testimony; which was removed to various places before the temple was built at Jerusalem, where he took up his residence, and his name was called upon, made mention of, and recorded for many generations: but that being destroyed and worship there at an end, men may now worship God in any place, so be it they do it in spirit and in truth; and wherever the name of God is truly called upon, and the glory of his divine perfection, as displayed in the salvation of sinners by Christ, is set forth, and Christ and him crucified is preached; and mention is made of his name as the only one in which salvation is; of his glorious person and offices, of his righteousness, blood, and sacrifice, for justification, remission of sins, and atonement; and his ordinances are administered, which are memorials of his love and grace; there Jehovah grants his presence: I will come unto thee: not locally or by change of place, nor by his omnipresence merely, so he is everywhere; nor in any visible way, but in a spiritual manner, by the communications of his grace and favour, see Joh 14:21, and I will bless thee; with his presence, than which nothing is more desirable and delightful; with the supplies of his grace, with peace and pardon, with a

justifying righteousness, with a right and title to eternal life, with enlarged views of these blessings and of interest in them. {t} Apologet. c. 25. {u} ymv ta rykza "memorare faciam nomen meum", Pagninus, Montanus; "ubi recordari faciam nomen meum, seu ubi faciam ut recordemini nominis mei", Piscator. Exodus 20:25 Ver. 25. And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone,.... If they chose instead of an earthen one to make one of stone, as they might in rocky places, where they came, and in such an one where they now were, Mount Sinai, under which hill an altar was built, Ex 24:4, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone; which would require time and occasion expense, to hew and polish them in an artificial way; but it was to be built of rude and unpolished stones, just as they were taken out of the quarry, or found lying by the way, and which were laid up in an heap one upon another, and was done with little trouble, and without any ornament, and easily separated and thrown down, when become useless: the reason of this law, as given by Maimonides {w}, is this, "because the idolaters of that time built their altars of hewn stones, therefore God forbid it, lest we should be like them, and that we might shun it in all things, he commanded the altar to be made of earth, as it is said, an altar of earth shalt thou make unto me; and if it could not be made without stones, that the stones should remain in their own natural form, and be neither hewn nor polished; as he after forbid a painted stone, and a plantation of trees by an altar; for in each of these there is one and the same intention and design, namely, that we might not worship him in the same manner in which idolaters used to worship their fictitious deities:"for if thou lift up thy tool upon it; or, thy sword {x}; it signifies any tool or instrument made of iron as a sword is, and here such an one as is used in hewing of stone; which, if lifted up on the altar, or on any of the stones of which it is built, to strike and hew them with, thou hast polluted it; and so made it unfit for use: how this should be done hereby is not easy to say, no good reason seems to be assignable for it but the will and pleasure of God; who so appointed it, and reckoned that a pollution, and would have it so thought by others, which with men is accounted ornamental; his thoughts and judgment are not as man's: the Targum of Jonathan is, "for if thou liftest up iron, of which a sword is made, upon a stone, thou wilt profane it;" the reason which the Misnic doctors {y} give, and Jarchi from them, is, "because iron was created to shorten the days of men, but the other was made to prolong the days of men: and therefore it cannot be just that that which shortens should be lifted up and agitated over that which prolongs:"but Maimonides gives a better reason of it, as Abarbinel understands him, which was to prevent persons making images in stones {z}, which image making is the thing guarded against and forbidden in the context; but still better is that of Isaac Arama {a}, that the hands of the artificer were to abstain from the stones of the altar, lest that good which men obtain of God at the altar should be attributed to any work of theirs: though, after all, it is right what Aben Ezra, says, that it does not belong to us to search after the reasons of the commands, at least not in too curious and bold a manner, and where God is silent and has not thought fit to give any. {w} Moreh Nevochim, par. 3. c. 45.

{x} Kbrx "gladium tuum", Montanus, Piscator, Cartwright. {y} Misnah Middot, c. 3. sect. 4. {z} Apud L'Empereur in Middot, ib. {a} Apud Rivet in loc. Exodus 20:26 Ver. 26. Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar,.... That is, you priests, the sons of Aaron, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase the words; the altar of burnt offering built when the tabernacle was seemed not to require any, being but three cubits high, Ex 27:1 but that in Solomon's temple did, being ten cubits high, 2Ch 4:1 and therefore some method must be used to ascend it, and do the business that was to be done on it: now the Jews say {b}, there was what they call "Kibbesh", a sort of a causeway made of earth thrown up, which rose gradually and led to the top of the altar, and was about thirty two cubits long and sixteen broad: and so the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases the words, "thou shalt not go up by steps to mine altar, but by bridges;" express mention is made of stairs to the altar in Ezekiel's vision, Eze 43:17 that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon; that part of the body which is not to be named, and ought not to be seen, and which would be exposed if there were many steps, and these at a distance from each other; which would oblige them to take large strides, and so be in danger of discovering those parts which would make them the object of contempt and ridicule with the people; since as yet breeches were not used, and the garments were long loose ones, which were easily turned aside, or the parts under them seen by those below; to prevent which, afterwards linen breeches were ordered to be made for the priests, and to be used by them in their service: Maimonides {c} thinks the reason of this was, because formerly the idolatrous worship of Peor was performed by uncovering of their nakedness before it; and so by this is expressed God's detestation of such an impure and abominable practice; but this is uncertain; however, this we may be sure of, that this is the will of God, that all immodesty and indecency, and whatever tends to create impure thoughts and stir up unclean lusts, should be carefully avoided in his worship. {b} Middot, c. 3. sect. 3. {c} Ut supra. (Apud L'Empereur in Middot, ib.)

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 21:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 21

In this, and the two following chapters, are delivered various laws and precepts, partly of a moral, and partly of a religious, but chiefly of a civil nature, respecting the commonwealth of Israel, and its political good. This chapter treats of servants, and laws relating to them; to menservants, how long they shall serve, and what is to be done to those who are desirous of staying with their masters after their time is up, [Ex 21:1](#), to maidservants, and especially betrothed ones, either to a father or a son, [Ex 21:7](#), likewise it contains laws concerning the slaughter of men, whether with design or unawares, [Ex 21:12](#), and concerning the ill usage of parents, [Ex 21:15](#), and man stealing, [Ex 21:16](#) and of mischief that comes by men's quarrelling and fighting, [Ex 21:18](#) and by smiting a man or maidservant, [Ex 21:20](#), to a woman with child, that is, by means of men's striving and contending with each other, [Ex 21:22](#) and of damages that come by oxen, or to them, [Ex 21:28](#).

Ver. 1. **Now these are the judgments,**.... The judicial laws respecting the civil state of the people of Israel, so called because they are founded on justice and equity, and are according to the judgment of God, whose judgment is according to truth; and because they are such by which the commonwealth of Israel was to be judged or governed, and were to be the rule of their conduct to one another, and a rule of judgment to their judges in the execution of judgment and justice among them:

which thou shall set before them; besides the ten commands before delivered. They were spoken by God himself in the hearing of the people; these were delivered to Moses after he went up to the mount again, at the request of the people, to be their mediator, to be by him set before them as the rule of their behaviour, and to enjoin them the observance of them; in order to which he was not only to rehearse them, but to write them out, and set them in a plain and easy light before them: and though they did not hear these with their own ears from God himself, as the ten commands; yet, as they had the utmost reason to believe they came from him, and it was at their own request that he, and not God, might speak unto them what was further to be said, with a promise they would obey it, as if they had immediately heard it from him; it became them to receive these laws as of God, and yield a cheerful obedience to them; nor do we find they ever questioned the authority of them; and as their government was a Theocracy, and God was more immediately their King than he was of any other people, it was but right, and what might be expected, that they should have their civil laws from him, and which was their privilege, and gave them the preference to all

other nations, [De 4:5](#).

[Exodus 21:2](#)

Ver. 2. **If thou buy an Hebrew servant**,.... Who sells himself either through poverty, or rather is sold because of his theft, see [Ex 22:3](#) and so the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it,

"when ye shall buy for his theft, a servant, a son of an Israelite;"

agreeably to which Aben Ezra observes, this servant is a servant that is sold for his theft; and he says, it is a tradition with them, that a male is sold for his theft, but not a female; and the persons who had the selling of such were the civil magistrates, the Sanhedrim, or court of judicature; so Jarchi, on the text, says, "if thou buy", &c. that is, of the hand of the sanhedrim who sells him for his theft:

six years he shall serve; and no longer; and the Jewish doctors say {d}, if his master dies within the six years he must serve his son, but not his daughter, nor his brother, nor any other heirs:

and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing; without paying any money for his freedom, as it is explained [Ex 21:11](#), nay, on the other hand, his master was not to send him away empty, but furnish him liberally out of his flock, floor, and wine press, since his six years' servitude was worth double that of an hired servant, [De 15:13](#), and his freedom was to take place as soon as the six years were ended, and the seventh began, in which the Jewish writers agree: the Targum of Jonathan is, at the entrance of the seventh; and Aben Ezra's explanation is, at the beginning of the seventh year of his being sold; and Maimonides {e} observes the same. Now as this servant, in the state of servitude, was an emblem of that state of bondage to sin, Satan, and the law, which man is brought into by his theft, his robbing God of his glory by the transgression of his precepts; so likewise, in his being made free, he was an emblem of that liberty wherewith Christ, the Son of God, makes his people free from the said bondage, and who are free indeed, and made so freely without money, and without price, of pure free grace, without any merit or desert of theirs; and which freedom is attended with many bountiful and liberal blessings of grace.

{d} Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Kiddushin, c. 1. sect. 2. {e} Hilchot Abadim, c. 2. sect. 2.

Exodus 21:3

Ver. 3. **If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself**,.... That is, if he came into his servitude "alone", as the Septuagint version has it, he should go out of it in like manner; the word for "by himself", some interpret with "his garment" {f}, or the skirt of one; and then the sense seems to be, that as he was clothed when he was sold, so he should be when made free: but rather the phrase literally is "with his body" {g}; not his naked body, or as destitute of raiment, and the necessaries of life; for, as before observed, his master was to furnish him liberally with good things: but the plain meaning is, that if he was a single or unmarried man when he entered his master's service, he should go out, so; or as a Jewish writer {h} expresses it, as if he should say, with his body, without another body with him, who is his wife, as appears by what follows; unless his master should give him a wife while in his service, which is supposed in the next verse, and even then he was to go out alone, if he chose to go out at all; though Jarchi says, if he was not married at first, his master might not give him a Canaanitish woman to beget slaves of her:

if he were married, then his wife shall go with him; that is, if he had a wife, a daughter of Israel, as the Targum of Jonathan; or an Israelitish woman, as Jarchi, and had her at his coming; for otherwise, if it was one his master after gave him, she might not go out, as appears by the following verse; but being his wife before his servitude, and an Israelitish woman, was not the master's bondmaid, nor bought with his money, and therefore might go out free with her husband.

{f} wpgb "cum quali veste", V. L. "cum veste sua"; some in Vatablus & Drusius. {g} "Cum corpore suo", Munster, Pagninus, Vatablus, Drusius; "solus corpore suo", Junius & Tremellius; "cum solo corpore suo", Piscator. {h} R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 15. 1.

Exodus 21:4

Ver. 4. **If his master have given him a wife**,.... One of his slaves, a Canaanitish woman, on purpose to beget slaves on her, since all born in his house were his own; this is supposed to be after he was come into his house, and into his service:

and she have born him sons or daughters; as she might have born him several of the one sort, or the other, if she was given to him quickly after his servitude began:

the wife and her children shall be her master's: she being his slave, and bought with his money, he had a right unto her, and to the children belonging to her, the birth

following the belly; and being born in his house, they were also his. Jarchi here observes, that the Scripture speaks of a Canaanitish woman, for an Hebrew woman went out at the sixth year, and even before the sixth, if she produced the signs, that is, of puberty:

and he shall go out by himself; without his wife and children: if it be objected to this law, that it is contrary to the law of marriage, which is indissoluble, but by this dissolved; it may be replied, that the servant was not obliged by it to leave his wife, unless he chose it; on complying with certain conditions after mentioned, he might continue with her; besides, she was, according to Jarchi, but his secondary wife, and not only so, the marriage was not lawful, being with a Canaanitish woman, and not agreeable to the Lord; and being also her master's slave, to whom he had a right, he could retain her if he pleased, having only given her to his servant to beget slaves on for him.

Exodus 21:5

Ver. 5. And if the servant shall plainly say,.... Or, "in saying shall say" {i} shall express himself in plain and full terms, and repeat his words, and abide by them, signifying it as his last will and determined resolution:

I love my master, my wife, and my children, and I will not go out free; but continue in his servitude, having a great affection for his master, and that he might enjoy his wife and children he dearly loved; and being animated with such a principle, his servitude was a pleasure to him: and when our obedience to God springs from love to him, and to his cause and interest, which should be as dear to us as our families, it is then acceptable to God and delightful to ourselves; in [De 15:16](#),

it is, because he loveth thee, and thine house, because he is well with thee; hence the Jewish writers say {k}, understanding by "house" a family, if a servant has a wife and children and his master not, his ear is not to be bored; and if his master has a wife and children and he has not, his ear is not to be bored; if he loves his master and his master do not love him, or his master loves him and he do not love his master, or if he is sick, &c. his ear is not to be bored.

{i} rmay rma {k} T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 22. 1. Maimon. in Misn. Kiddushin, c. 1. sect. 2.

Exodus 21:6

Ver. 6. **Then his master shall bring him unto the judges**,.... To Elohim, to God, to the judgment seat of God, according to the Septuagint; to some person or persons to inquire of God what is to be done in such a case; but this seems needless, since it is here declared: no doubt civil magistrates or judges are meant by Elohim, or the gods, as in [Ps 82:1](#), and so Jarchi interprets it of the house of judgment, or sanhedrim, the court that had convicted the servant of theft, and had sold him to him, it was proper he should acquaint them with it, have their opinion about it; and especially it was proper to have him to them, that he might before them, even in open court, declare his willingness to abide in his master's service; and from whom, as the Targum of Jonathan, he was to receive power and authority to retain him in his service:

he shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost; either of the gate of the city, where the judges were sitting, before whom what follows was to be done, as Aben Ezra suggests; or rather the door of his master, or any other man's, as Maimonides {1}:

and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; or with a needle, as the Targum of Jonathan, which also says it was the right ear; and so Jarchi; and the upper part of it, as says Maimonides, who likewise observes, that that with which it is bored must be of metal; and moreover, that it is the master himself that must do it, and not his son, nor his messenger, nor a messenger of the sanhedrim {m}: the ear is an hieroglyphic of obedience, and the boring of it through to the doorpost denotes the strict and close obedience of such a servant to his master, and how he is, and ought to be, addicted to his service, and be constantly employed in it, and never stir from it, nor so much as go over the threshold of his master's house. This custom of boring a servant's ear continued in Syria till the times of Juvenal, as appears by some lines of his: {n}

and he shall serve him for ever; as long as he lives {o}; however, until the year of jubilee, as the Targum of Jonathan, and so Jarchi; if there was one before his death, for nothing else could free him; denoting freedom by Christ in his acceptable year, and day of salvation.

{1} Hilchot Abadim, c. 3. sect. 9. {m} Ibid. {n} "----Molles quod in aure fenestras Arguerint, licet ipse negem?" Satyr. 1. {o} "Serviet in aeternum, qui parvo nesciet uti". Horat.

Exodus 21:7

Ver. 7. **And if a man sell his daughter to be a maidservant**,.... That is, if an Israelite, as

the Targum of Jonathan, sells his little daughter, as the same Targum, and so Jarchi and Aben Ezra, one that is under age, that is not arrived to the age of twelve years and a day, and this through poverty; he not being able to support himself and his family, puts his daughter out to service, or rather sells her to be a servant:

she shall not go out as the menservants do; that are sold, before described; or rather, according to the Targum,

"as the Canaanitish servants go out, who are made free, because of a tooth, or an eye, (the loss of them,

[Ex 21:26](#)) but in the years of release, and with the signs (of puberty), and in the jubilee, and at the death of their masters, with redemption of silver,"

so Jarchi.

[Exodus 21:8](#)

Ver. 8. **If she please not her master**,.... "Be evil in the eyes of her master" {p}; and he has no liking of her, and love to her, not being agreeable in her person, temper, or conduct, so that he does not choose to make her his wife:

who hath betrothed her to him; but not completed the marriage, as he promised, when he bought her, or at least gave reason to expect that he would; for, according to the Jewish canons, a Hebrew handmaid might not be sold but to one who laid himself under obligation to espouse her to himself, or his son, when she was fit to be betrothed {q}; and so Jarchi says, he ought to espouse her, and take her to be his wife, for the money of her purchase is the money of her espousals. There is a double reading of this passage, the Keri, or marginal reading we follow; the Cetib, or written text, is, "who hath not betrothed her", both may be taken in, "who hath not betrothed her to him", as he said he would, or as it was expected he should; for, had she been really betrothed, what follows could not have been done:

then shall he let her be redeemed; she being at age, and fit for marriage, and her master not caring to marry her, her father shall redeem her, as the Targum of Jonathan; it was incumbent on him to do that, as it was on her master to let her be redeemed, to admit of the redemption of her; or whether, as Aben Ezra says, she redeemed herself, or her father, or one of her relations, if she was near the six years (the end of them), they reckoned how many years she had served, and how many were yet to the seventh, or to the time that she is in her own power, and according to the computation was the redemption: thus, for instance, as it is by others {r} put, if she

was bought for six pounds, then one pound is the service of every year; and if she redeemed herself, her master took off of the money for the years she had served; or thus {s}, if she was bought for sixty pence, and had served two years, he must pay her forty pence, and so free her:

to sell her unto a strange nation, he shall have no power; that is, to another man, as both the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, even to an Israelite that was of another family, to whom the right of redemption did not belong; for to sell an Israelite, man or woman, to a Gentile, or one of another nation, was not allowed of in any case, as Josephus {t} observes; but the meaning is, he had no power to sell her to another, though of the same nation, to be his handmaid; this power neither her master nor her father had, as Jarchi asserts, she being redeemed, and in her own power:

seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her; in not fulfilling his promise made to her father when he sold her to him, or not answering the expectation he had raised in her; and especially he dealt thus with her, if he had corrupted her, and yet refused to betroth and marry her.

{p} ynyeb her "mala in oculis", Montanus; "mala videbitur in oculis", Junius & Tremellius; "mala fuerit in oculis", Drusius. {q} Maimon. Hilchot Abadim, c. 4. sect. 11. & in Misn. Kiddushin, c. 1. sect. 2. {r} Bartenora in Kiddush. ib. {s} Maimon. in ib. {t} Antiqu. l. 16. c. 1. sect. 1.

Exodus 21:9

Ver. 9. And if he have betrothed her unto his son,.... Not caring to betroth and marry her himself, as being more suitable in age for his son than for himself;

he shall deal with her after the manner of daughters; as if she was his daughter, and give her a dowry: or the son shall treat her after the manner the daughters of Israel are treated when married, by giving her food, raiment, and the duty of marriage, so Jarchi: or after the manner of the daughters of Israel that are virgins, and who are not sold, as Aben Ezra.

Exodus 21:10

Ver. 10. If he take him another wife,.... The father takes another wife for his son, or the son takes another wife to himself after he has betrothed and married his father's maidservant:

her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish; neither deny it her in whole, nor lessen it in part, but give her her full due of each. What is meant by the two former words is easy, and admits of no difficulty, the latter is differently interpreted. Some take it to signify no other than an "habitation" {u}, that as he was to provide food and raiment for her, so an house to dwell, in; but the generality of interpreters, Jewish and Christian, understand it as we do, of the conjugal duty, the use of the marriage bed, or what the apostle calls due benevolence, [1Co 7:3](#). The word is thought to have the signification of a fixed time for it; and the Misnic doctors {w} are very particular in assigning the set times of it for different persons; and in those countries where there were, and where there still are, plurality of wives, each had, and have their turns, see [Ge 30:15](#).

{u} htne "habitationem ejus", Montanus, Junius & Tremellius; so some in Aben Ezra. Vid. Pfeiffer. "dubia vexata", cent. 1. loc. 97. {w} Misn. Cetubot, c. 5. sect. 6.

[Exodus 21:11](#)

Ver. 11. **And if he do not these three unto her**,.... Not the three things last mentioned; though this sense, Aben Ezra says, many of their interpreters give, which is rejected by him, so do some Christian expositors; but these three things are, espousing her to himself, or to his son, or redeeming her by the hand of her father; that is, letting her be redeemed by him, as the Targum of Jonathan; and so Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Ben Melech: the meaning is, if one or other of these things are not done,

then shall she go out free without money; be dismissed from her servitude, and not obliged to pay anything for her freedom; the Targum of Jonathan adds, he shall give her a bill of divorce; that is, the son to whom she had been betrothed, and another wife taken by him, and she denied the above things; which favours the first sense.

[Exodus 21:12](#)

Ver. 12. **He that smiteth a man, so that he die**,.... The Targum of Jonathan is, that smites a man or daughter of Israel with the sword; but there is no need to restrain the words either to persons of any certain nation, nor to any instrument with which a person may be smitten as to die: but any human person, man, woman, or child, of whatsoever nation, and they smitten with anything whatever, that issues in their death:

shall surely be put to death; by the order of the civil magistrate, and by the hand of such as shall be appointed by him; for this is the original law of God, [Ge 9:6](#).

[Exodus 21:13](#)

Ver. 13. **And if a man lie not in wait**,.... For the life of another to take it away; or does not do it willingly, as the Septuagint version, does not seek after it, nor design it:

but God delivers him into his hand; it being suffered and ordered by the providence of God, without whose knowledge and will nothing comes to pass, even what may seem to be a contingent thing, or matter of chance, to us; or it is so brought about in providence, that one man falls into the hands of another, and his life is taken away by him, though not purposely and maliciously; because, as Aben Ezra expresses it, for another sin which he has committed, and for which he must die in this way, though not intended by the person the more immediate cause of his death:

then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee; and there be safe both from the avenger of blood, and the civil magistrate; which place, while Israel were in the wilderness, was the camp of the Levites, according to Jarchi, or the altar, as follows; but when they were come to Canaan's land, there were cities of refuge appointed for such persons, that killed a man unawares, to flee to, and where they were safe from private vengeance, and falling a sacrifice to public justice.

[Exodus 21:14](#)

Ver. 14. **But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile**,.... That comes with malice in his heart, with wrath in his countenance, in a bold, daring, hostile manner, using all the art, cunning, and contrivance he can, to take away the life of his neighbour; no asylum, no refuge, not anything to screen him from justice is to be allowed him: hence, a messenger of the sanhedrim, or an executioner, one that inflicts the forty stripes, save one, or a physician, or one that chastises his son or scholar, under whose hands persons may die, do not come under this law; for though what they do they may do wilfully, yet not with guile, as Jarchi and others observe, not with an ill design, but for good:

thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die: that being the place which in early times criminals had recourse unto, Joab and others, as well as in later times, to secure them from vengeance; but a man guilty of wilful murder was not to be protected in this way; and the Targum of Jonathan is,

"though he is a priest, (the Jerusalem Targum has it, an high priest,) and ministers at mine altar, thou shalt take him from thence, and slay him with the sword,"

so Jarchi; but the law refers not to a person ministering in his office at the altar of the Lord, but to one that should flee there for safety, which yet he should not have.

Exodus 21:15

Ver. 15. **And he that smiteth his father or his mother**,.... With his fist, or with a stick, or cane, or such thing, though they died not with the blow, yet it occasioned any wound, or caused a bruise, or the part smitten black and blue, or left any print of the blow; for, as Jarchi says, the party was not guilty, less by smiting there was a bruise, or weal, made, or any mark or scar: but if so it was, then he

shall be surely put to death; the Targum of Jonathan adds, with the suffocation of a napkin; and so Jarchi says with strangling; the manner of which was this, the person was sunk into a dunghill up to his knees, and two persons girt his neck with a napkin or towel until he expired. This crime was made capital, to show the heinousness of it, how detestable it was to God, and in order to deter from it.

Exodus 21:16

Ver. 16. **And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him**,.... One of the children of Israel, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, and so the Septuagint version: but though this law was given to the Israelites primarily, yet was made for men stealers in general, as the apostle observes, who plainly has reference to it, **1Ti 1:9**:

or if he be found in his hand; before the selling of him, as Jarchi notes, since he stole him in order to sell him, he was guilty of death, as follows:

he shall surely be put to death; with strangling, as the same Jewish writer remarks, as on the preceding verse; and Jarchi sets it down as a rule, that all death in the law, simply expressed, is strangling.

Exodus 21:17

Ver. 17. **And he that curseth his father, or his mother**,.... Though he does not smite

them with his hand, or with any instrument in it, yet if he smites them with his tongue, reviles and reproaches them, speaks evil of them, wishes dreadful imprecations upon them, curses them by the name explained, as the Targum of Jonathan calls it, by the name Jehovah, wishing the Lord would curse them, or that his curse might light upon them, see Pr 20:20, shall surely be put to death; or be killed with casting stones on him, as the Targum of Jonathan, or with stoning; so Jarchi, who observes, that wherever it is said, "his blood be upon him", it is meant of stoning, as it is of the man that curses his father or his mother, Le 20:9 which was after this manner, the place of stoning was two cubits high, to which the malefactor with his hands bound was brought; from whence one of the witnesses against him cast him down headlong, of which, if he did not die, then they took up stones and cast on him, and if he died not through them, then all Israel came and stoned him; that is, the multitude upon the spot: this verse in the Septuagint version follows Ex 21:15, with which it agrees, both respecting the same persons. Exodus 21:18 Ver. 18. And if men strive together,.... Quarrel and fight, and wrestle with and box one another: and one smite another with a stone; which lying near him he might take up, and in his passion throw it at his antagonist: or with his fist; with his double fist, as we express it, with his hand closed, that it might come with the greater force, and give the greater blow: and he die not, but keepeth his bed; does not die with the blow of the stone or fist, yet receives so much damage by it that he is obliged to take to his bed; or, as the Targum of Jerusalem paraphrases it, is cast on the bed sick; or, as the Targum of Jonathan, falls into a disease, as a fever, or the like, through the force of the blow, so that he is confined to his room and to his bed. Exodus 21:19 Ver. 19. If he rise again,.... From his bed, or from his disease, as the last mentioned Targum, recovers again, at least so far as to be able to do what follows: and walk abroad upon his staff; if he is able to get out of his bed, and especially out of his house, and can be seen walking about in the street or in the field, though he is obliged to make use of a staff, and lean upon it, being yet weak and sickly; then shall he that smote him be quit; from the judgment of slaying, as the Targum, he shall not be charged with manslaughter, or be found guilty of a capital crime, but discharged from that: only shall he pay for the loss of his time; as much as he could have got in that time by his labour, from which he was obliged to cease: the Jewish writers add other things also he was to pay for, as the Targum of Jonathan, particularly; as for his pain, and for his loss of any member, and for his shame and disgrace, as well as the physician's fee, which is supposed to be included in the next clause: and cause [him] to be thoroughly healed; take care that he has a physician or surgeon, and that the proper medicines be applied, and those continued until he is quite well; all which must be at the expense of the smiter. Exodus 21:20 Ver. 20. And if a man smite his servant or his maid with a rod,.... A Canaanitish servant or maid, as the Targum of Jonathan, and so Jarchi; and that only with a rod for the correction of them, and not with a sword or any such destroying weapon, which would seem as though he intended to kill, yet nevertheless: and he die under his hand; immediately,

while he is smiting or beating him or her, on the same day, as the above Targum interprets it: he shall be surely punished; or condemned to the punishment of being slain with the sword, as the said Targum and Jarchi explain it: this law was made to deter masters from using severity and cruelty towards their servants. Exodus 21:21 Ver. 21. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two,.... And does not die immediately, or the same day, but lives twenty four hours, as the Jewish writers interpret it; so Abendana {x} explains the phrase, "a day or two"; "a day which is as two days, and they are twenty four hours from time to time," that is, from the time he was smitten to the time of his continuance; and so it is elsewhere explained {y} by a day we understand a day, which is like two days, that is, from time to time, the meaning of which is, from a certain time in one day to the same in another: he shall not be punished; that is, with death; for he [is] his money; is bought with his money, and is good as money, and therefore it is a loss sufficient to him to lose him; and it may be reasonably thought he did not smite his servant with an intention to kill him, since he himself is the loser by it. {x} Not. in Miclol Yophi in loc. {y} Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Zabim, c. 2. sect. 3. Exodus 21:22 Ver. 22. If men strive,.... Quarrel and fight with one another, which is to be understood of Hebrews, as Aben Ezra observes: and hurt a woman with child; who being the wife of one of them, and also an Israelitish woman, interposes to part them, or help her husband; but the other, instead of striking his antagonist as he intended, gives her a blow: so that her fruit depart from her; or, "her children go forth" {z}, out of her womb, as she may have more than one; through the fright of the quarrel, and fear of her husband being hurt, and the blow she received by interposing, might miscarry, or, falling into labour, come before her time, and bring forth her offspring sooner than expected: and yet no mischief follow: to her, as the Targum of Jonathan, and so Jarchi and Aben Ezra restrain it to the woman; and which mischief they interpret of death, as does also the Targum of Onkelos; but it may refer both to the woman and her offspring, and not only to the death of them, but to any hurt or damage to either of them: now though there was none of any sort, he shall surely be punished; that is, be fined or mulcted for striking the woman, and hastening the childbirth: according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine; the husband might propose what fine should be paid, and might ask it in court; and if the smiter agreed to it, well and good, but if he judged it an exorbitant demand, he might appeal to the judges; for the husband might not lay what fine he pleased: this, if disputed, was to be decided by the judges, and as they determined it, it was paid; of which Maimonides {a} gives this account: "he that strikes a woman, and her fruit depart, though he did not intend it, is obliged to pay the price of the birth to the husband, and for hurt and pain to the woman; how do they estimate the price of the birth? they consider the woman how well she was before she brought forth, and how well she is after she has brought forth, and they give it to the husband; if the husband be dead, they give it to the heirs; if she is stricken after the death of her husband, they give the price of the birth to the woman." {z} hydly wayyw

"et egressi fuerint nati ejus", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius. {a} Hilchot Chobel Umazzik, c. 4. sect. 1. 2. Exodus 21:23Ver. 23. And if any mischief follow,.... According as that is, so shall it be done to the smiter: if death follows, then thou shalt give life for life; if death to the woman, so Jarchi and Aben Ezra interpret it; to which agrees the Targum of Jonathan, "but if there is death in her, then ye shall judge or condemn the life of the murderer for the life of the woman;" about which, Jarchi says, there is a difference among their doctors; some say life properly, absolutely the person himself; others say money, but not life properly; for he that intends to kill one and kills another is acquitted from death, but must pay to the heirs the price (of the person killed) as that person might be sold for in the market: and indeed it seems hard that a person that kills another at unawares should die for it; it is more reasonable that the punishment should in such a case be commuted for something less than life; and that though no satisfaction was to be taken for a wilful murderer, Nu 35:31, yet it seems to imply that it might be taken for one that was so without design; as by another law cities of refuge are appointed for the manslayer at unawares: the canons of the Jews, according to Maimonides {b}, run thus; "he that strikes a woman, and she miscarries and dies, although it is done ignorantly; lo, such an one is free from payment, and he does not pay anything, as it is said, "if there is no mischief, &c." the Scripture does not distinguish between what is done ignorantly and presumptuously, in a thing in which there is not death by the sanhedrim, to free him from payment; in what things? when he intends the woman; but if he intends his neighbour and strikes the woman, though she dies, since her death is, without intention, lo, this is a thing in which there is not death by the sanhedrim, and he pays the price of the birth:" the Septuagint version interprets this, not of the woman that miscarries and dies, but of the child that becomes an abortive; if that was not formed and shaped, then only a fine was to be laid, but if it was come to its proper form and shape, and so was animated or quickened, then life was to go for life: and so, according to the Salic laws, he that killed an infant in its mother's womb was to pay 8000 pence, which made two hundred shillings; but if he was the cause of a woman's miscarriage, by blows or otherwise, if the birth was animated, according to the civil law, he was to be punished with death {c}: but one would think, where this is only accidental and not intended, such a punishment is too rigid and severe: however, neither this nor what follows were left to the will of a private person to inflict at his pleasure, but to the civil magistrate; and therefore no ways encourages private revenge, in favour of which it was applied by the Pharisees in Christ's time, whose gloss he refutes, Mt 5:38 nor are the words directed to the offender in this and the following cases, but to Moses, and so to all judges under him and in succession, who were to see these laws put in execution. {b} Chobel Umazzik, c. 4. sect. 5. 6. {c} Vid L'Empereur in Misn. Bava Kama, c. 3. sect. 2. Exodus 21:24Ver. 24. Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot. This is "lex talionis", the law of retaliation, and from whence the Heathens had theirs; but whether this is to be taken strictly and literally, or only for

pecuniary mulcts, is a question; Josephus {d} understands it in the former sense, the Jewish writers generally in the latter; and so the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it;"the price of an eye for an eye, &c."Jarchi on the place observes, that,"he that puts out his neighbour's eye must pay him the price of his eye, according to the price of a servant sold in the market, and so of all the rest; for not taking away of members strictly is meant, as our doctors here interpret it;"in a place he refers to, and to which Aben Ezra agrees; and of the difference and dispute between the Jews concerning this matter,See Gill on "Mt 5:38" and indeed, though these laws of retaliation should, according to the letter of them, be attended to as far as they can; yet, in some cases, it seems necessary that they should not be strictly attended to, but some recompence made in another way, and nothing seems more agreeable than a pecuniary one: thus, for instance, this law cannot be literally executed, when one that has never an eye puts out the eye of another, as it is possible that a blind man may; or one that has no teeth may strike out the tooth of another; in such cases eye cannot be given for eye, nor tooth for tooth; and, as Saadiah Gaon {e} observes, if a man should smite the eye of his neighbour, and the third part of the sight of his eye should depart, how will he order it to strike such a stroke as that, without adding or lessening? and if a man that has but one eye, or one hand, or one foot, should damage another man in those parts, and must lose his other eye, or hand, or foot, he would be in a worse case and condition than the man he injured; since he would still have one eye, or hand, or foot; wherefore a like law of Charondas among the Thurians is complained of, since it might be the case, that a man with one eye might have that struck out, and so be utterly deprived of sight; whereas the man that struck it out, though he loses one for it, yet has another, and so not deprived of sight utterly, and therefore thought not to be sufficiently punished; and that it was most correct that he should have both his eyes put out for it: and hence Diodorus Siculus {f} reports of a one-eyed man who lost his eye, that he complained of this law to the people, and advised to have it altered: this "lex talionis" was among the Roman laws of the "twelve tables" {g}. {d} Antiqu. l. 4. c. 33. 35. {e} Apud Aben Ezram in loc. {f} Bibliothec. l. 12. par. 2. p. 82, 83. {g} A. Gell. Noct. Attic. l. 20. c. 1. Exodus 21:25Ver. 25. Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. This is to be understood of burning a man's flesh with fire; of wounds made by any means, so that the blood is let out; and of blows, and the prints and marks of them; of stripes and weals where the blood is settled, and the part is turned black and blue: the Targum of Jonathan is, the price of the pain of burning for burning, &c. and indeed, in everyone of these cases, the law could not be well literally executed; for it would be very difficult to burn and wound and mangle a man exactly as he had done another: and as Favorinus {h} objects against the law of the twelve tables of the Romans concerning retaliation, how can a man make a wound in another exactly as long, and as broad, and as deep as that he has given? nor would he suffer a larger to be made, as it was not just it should; and to which may be added, that all constitutions are not alike, and burning and wounding and striping, especially in some

parts, might prove mortal, and the person might die thereby; to them the law of retaliation would not be observed, the punishment would be exceeded; and it is much more agreeable to justice and equity that it should be lessened rather than increased; and it may be observed, the law of the twelve tables with the Romans, concerning maiming of members, only took place when the parties could not come to an agreement; and with respect to the Jewish law, Josephus {i} himself says, that the man that has his eye put out may receive money for it, if he is willing, which the law allows of. {h} A. Gell. Noct. Attic. l. 20. c. 1. {i} Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 4. c. 33, 35.)

Exodus 21:26Ver. 26. If a man smite the eye of his servant,... Give him a blow on the eye in a passion, as a correction for some fault he has committed:or the eye of his maid, that it perish; strike her on that part in like manner, so that the eye is beaten or drops out, or however loses its sight, and "[is] blinded", as the Septuagint version; or "corrupts" it {k}, it turns black and blue, and gathers corrupt matter, and becomes a sore eye; yet if the sight is not lost, or corrupts so as to perish, this law does not take place; the Targum of Jonathan, and to Jarchi restrain this to a Canaanitish servant or maid:he shall let him go free for his eye's sake; or "them", as the Septuagint; his right to them as a servant was hereby forfeited, and he was obliged to give them their freedom, let the time of servitude, that was to come, be what it would. This law was made to deter masters from using their servants with cruelty, since though humanity and goodness would not restrain them from ill usage of them, their own profit and advantage by them might. {k} htxv "et corruperit eum", Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius; so Ainsworth. Exodus 21:27Ver. 27. And if he smite out his manservant's tooth, or his maidservant's tooth,... Give them such a slap on the face, or a blow on the mouth, as to strike out one of their teeth; this also the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi restrain to a Canaanitish servant or maid;he shall let him go free for his tooth's sake; both him and her, the servant and the maid; this, though of lesser consequence than the loss of an eye, was punished in the same manner with the loss of the servant man or maid, to make masters careful how they abused their servants in any degree. And though only these parts are expressed, yet Jarchi and Aben Ezra observe, that all other principal members of the body, which they reckon to be twenty four, are included, as the fingers, toes, &c. Exodus 21:28Ver. 28. If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die,... That are Israelites, of whom only Aben Ezra interprets it; but though they may be principally designed, yet not solely; for no doubt if one of another nation was gored to death by the ox of an Israelite, the same penalty would be inflicted, as follows:then the ox shall be surely stoned; which is but an exemplification of the original law given to Noah and his sons, Ge 9:5: "at the hand of every beast will I require it"; i.e. the blood of the lives of men; which shows the care God takes of them, that even a beast must die that is the means of shedding man's blood:and his flesh shall not be eaten; it being as an impure beast according to this sentence, as Maimonides {l} observes; and even though it might have been killed in a regular manner before it was stoned, it was not to be eaten; no, not even by Heathens, nor by dogs might it be eaten, as a dead

carcass might by a proselyte of the gate, or a stranger; this might not be given nor sold to him; for, as Aben Ezra observes, all profit of them is here forbidden:but the owner of the ox [shall be] quit; from punishment, as the last mentioned writer observes, from suffering death; he shall only suffer the loss of his ox: the Targum of Jonathan is,"he shall be quit from the judgment of slaughter (or condemnation of murder), and also from the price of a servant or maid,"which was thirty shekels, Ex 21:32. {1} Hilchot Maacolot Asurot, c. 4. sect. 22. Exodus 21:29Ver. 29. But if the ox were wont to push with his horns in time past,.... Or "from or before yesterday, to the third" {m} that is, three days before, and had made three pushes, as Jarchi explains it:and it hath been testified to his owner; by sufficient witnesses, who saw him push at people for three days past: the Targum of Jonathan is,"and it hath been testified to the face of his owner three days."Concerning this testimony Maimonides {n} thus writes,"this is a testification, all that testify of it three days; but if he pushes, or bites, or kicks, or strikes even an hundred times on one day, this is no testification (not a sufficient one): three companies of witnesses testify of it in one day, lo, this is a doubt, whether it is a (proper) testimony or not; there is no testification but before the owner, and before the sanhedrim:"and he hath not kept him in; in some enclosed place, house or field, not frequented by people, and where there was no danger of doing any hurt, if this care was not taken, after a proper testimony had been given of his vicious disposition. By the Roman laws {o} oxen that pushed with their horns were to have hay bound about them, that those that met them might beware of them; hence that of Horace {p}: but that he hath killed a man or a woman; by pushing and goring them with his horns, or any other way, as biting or kicking:the ox shall be stoned; as is provided for the preceding law:and his owner shall be put to death; since he was accessory to the death of the person killed, not keeping in his beast, when he had sufficient notice of his vicious temper: the Targum of Jonathan, and so other Jewish writers, interpret this of death sent upon him from heaven, or death by the immediate hand of God, as sudden death, or death by some disease inflicted, or before a man is fifty years of age; but there is no doubt to be made but this intends death by the civil magistrate, according to the original law, Ge 9:6. {m} Mvly lmtm "ab heri et nudiustertius", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Piscator, Drusius. {n} Hilchot Niske Mammon, c. 6. sect. 1, 2. {o} Plutarch. in Crasso. {p} "Foenum habet in cornu, longe fuge". Horat. Sermon. 1. 1. Satyr. 4. Exodus 21:30Ver. 30. If there be laid on him a sum of money,.... By the decree of the judges, as Aben Ezra, or which the sanhedrim of Israel have laid upon him; if his sentence of death is commuted for a fine, with the consent of the relations of the deceased, who in such a case are willing to show mercy, and take a fine instead of the person's death; supposing it was through carelessness and negligence, and not with any ill design that he did not keep up his ox from doing damage, after he had notice:then he shall give for the ransom of his life whatever, is laid upon him; whatever mulct or fine he is amerced with by the court, instead of the sentence of death first pronounced. Of this ransom Maimonides {q} thus writes:"the ransom is

according as the judges consider what is the price (or value) of him that is slain; (i.e. according to his rank, whether a noble or common man, a free man or a servant) all is according to the estimation of him that is slain.--To whom do they give the ransom? to the heirs of the slain; and if a woman is killed, the ransom is given to the heirs of her father's (family), and not to her husband." {q} Hilchot Niske Mammon, c. 11. sect. 1, 2. Exodus 21:31 Ver. 31. Whether he have gored a son, or have gored a daughter,.... A little son or daughter, and both Israelites, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra; this is observed, because only a man or woman are made mention of in Ex 21:29 persons grown up; and lest it should be thought that only adult persons were intended, this is added, to show that the same regard is had to little ones as to grown persons, should they suffer by an ox in like manner as men and women may. The Targum of Jonathan restrains this to a son or daughter of an Israelite; but the life of everyone, of whatsoever nation, is equally provided for, and guarded against by the original law of God: according to this judgment shall it be done unto him; to the owner of the ox that has gored a child, male or female; that is, he shall be put to death, if he has been warned of the practice of his ox for three days past, and has took no care to keep him in; or he shall pay the ransom of his life, as it has been laid by the court, with the consent of the relations of the children. Exodus 21:32 Ver. 32. If the ox shall push a manservant, or a maidservant,.... Which the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi interpret of a Canaanitish servant, man or maid; but no doubt the same provision was made for an Hebrew servant, man or maid, as for a Gentile one: he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver; that is, the owner of the ox shall pay so much to the masters of the servants for the loss they have sustained by his ox goring them; and Maimonides {r} observes, that "the ransom of servants, whether great or small, whether male or female, is fixed in the law, thirty shekels of good silver, whether the servant is worth a hundred pounds, or whether he is worth but a penny." This was the price our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was sold at, See Gill on "Mt 26:15". {r} Hilchot Niske Maimon, c. 11. sect. 1. Exodus 21:33 Ver. 33. If a man shall open a pit,.... That has been dug in time past, and filled up again, or take the covering from it, and leave it uncovered: "or if a man shall dig a pit, and not cover it": a new one, in the street, as the Targum of Jonathan; or in a public place, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra; otherwise a man might dig one for water, in his own fields, in enclosed places, where there was no danger of cattle coming thither, and falling therein: and an ox or an ass fall therein; or any other beast, as Jarchi observes; for these are mentioned only as instances, and are put for all others. Maimonides {s} says, "if a man digs a pit in a public place, and an ox or ass fall into it and die, though the pit is full of shorn wool, and the like, the owner of the pit is bound to pay the whole damage; and this pit (he says) must be ten hands deep; if it is less than that, and an ox, or any other beast or fowl fall into it and die, he is free," {s} Hilchot Niske Maimon. c. 12. sect. 1, 10. so Bartenora in Misn. Bava Kama, c. 1. sect. 1. Exodus 21:34 Ver. 34. The owner of the pit shall make it good,.... Repair the loss of the ox or ass: and give the money unto the owner of them: the price of

them, what they are worth: the Targum of Jonathan is, "the owner of the pit shall pay the silver, he shall return to its owner the price of the ox or ass:"and the dead beast shall be his; either the owner of the pit; who pays the full value for the ox or ass killed, which seems but reasonable; or "the injured person as Jarchi, for he says, they reckon or estimate the carcass, and he takes it for the price;"that is, for part of the price it is valued at. Exodus 21:35 Ver. 35. And if one man's ox hurt another's, that he die,.... By pushing with his horns, or his body, or by biting with his teeth, as Jarchi, or by any way whatever:then they shall sell the live ox, and divide the money; the Scripture speaks, as the same writer observes, of one of equal value, otherwise the man that had his ox killed might be greatly a gainer by it; for if his ox was a poor one, and of little value, and the ox that killed his a good one, of value greatly superior, which according to this law was to be sold, and the money divided between the two owners, the man that lost his ox might have double the worth of it, or more, which was not equitable. On the other hand, according to the Jewish canons {t}, the case stood thus,"when an ox of the value of one pound strikes an ox of the value of twenty, and kills him, and, lo, the carcass is of the value of four pounds, the owner of the ox is bound to pay him eight pounds, which is the half of the damage, (added to the half part of the price of the carcass,) but he is not bound to pay, but of the body of the ox which hurts, because it is said, "they shall sell the live ox"; wherefore if an ox of the value of twenty pieces of money should kill one of two hundred, and the carcass is valued at a pound, the master of the carcass cannot say to the master of the live ox, give me fifty pieces of money; but it will be said to him, lo, the ox which did the hurt is before thee, take him, and go thy way, although he is worth no more than a penny:"and the dead ox also they shall divide; the money the carcass is worth; or it is sold for. {t} Maimon. Hilchot Niske Mammon, c. 1. sect. 1. Exodus 21:36 Ver. 36. Or if it be known that the ox hath used to push in time past,.... If it is a plain case, and a thing well known in the neighbourhood, and there are witnesses enough to testify it, that it has yesterday, and for two or three days running, pushed with his horns men and cattle, as they have come in his way, See Gill on "Ex 21:29"and his owner hath not kept him in; took no care to prevent his doing mischief by putting him into a barn or out house, or into an enclosure, where he could do no damage to any:he shall surely pay ox for ox; that is, he shall give as good an ox to him, whose ox has been killed by his, as that was, or pay him the full worth and value of it: and the dead shall be his own; shall not be divided as in the preceding case, but shall be the proprietor's wholly, that is, the sufferer's; because the owner of the vicious ox took no care of him, though it was well known he was mischievous, for which negligence he was punished this way.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 22:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 22

This chapter contains various laws concerning theft, [Ex 22:1](#), concerning damage done to fields and vineyards by beasts, and to corn in stacks or standing, by fire, [Ex 22:5](#), concerning anything or creature deposited in the hands of a neighbour, and they be stolen or lost by one means or another, [Ex 22:7](#), concerning anything borrowed, and it comes to any damage, [Ex 22:14](#), concerning fornication, [Ex 22:16](#) concerning witchcraft, bestiality, and idolatry, [Ex 22:18](#) concerning oppression, and affliction of the stranger, fatherless, and widow, [Ex 22:21](#) concerning taking usury and pledges, [Ex 22:25](#), concerning irreverence to magistrates, [Ex 22:28](#), concerning the offering of firstfruits to God, [Ex 22:29](#) and the chapter is concluded with a prohibition of eating anything torn by beasts, [Ex 22:31](#).

Ver. 1. **If a man shall steal an ox or a sheep**,.... In which the substance of men chiefly lay in those times, and particularly the people of Israel, who were now come out of Egypt, with their flocks and herds, and these lying near together, were the more liable to be stolen; and hence also the laws in the preceding chapter concerning oxen and damages done by them, and oxen and sheep are only mentioned; perhaps chiefly because used in sacrifice, as well as serviceable for other things; not but that stealing other cattle and other things were criminal and forbidden, and to be punished in proportion:

and kill it, or sell it; either of which cases would plainly show that he took it away with an intention to deprive the owner of it, and to convert it to his own use:

he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep; the reason of this difference, five being obliged to be given for the one, and but four for the other, is, because the one was more valuable than the other, as well as more useful, and also more easily stolen, and therefore the greater mulct or fine was laid upon the theft of it, to deter from it: the Targum of Jonathan expresses the reason of the law thus; five for oxen, because the theft of them hindered from ploughing, or made to cease from it; and for sheep but four, because there was trouble in the theft of them, and there was no tillage or agriculture by them: and Saadiah Gaon observes, that the damage that comes to the owner of the ox is more than that by a lamb, because with it, the ox, he ploughs, which is a creature that was used in those countries to be employed in that

service, as well as in treading out the corn: Maimonides {u} accounts for it thus,

"the restitution of the theft of oxen is increased by one, because the theft of them is easy; sheep are fed in flocks, and are easily kept and watched, and can scarcely be taken away by theft but in the night; but oxen are fed scattered here and there, and therefore cannot be so easily kept by the herdsmen; hence also their theft used to be more common:"

four fold restitution was in use with the ancient Persians, with whom it was a rule,

"whoever took any substance of another, in retaliation they took fourfold from him, and if he restored it, he gave fourfold of the same {w}."

{u} Moreh Nevochim, par. 3. c. 41. {w} Lib. Shed-dar, apud Hyde Relig. Vet. Pers. p. 472.

Exodus 22:2

Ver. 2. **If a thief be found breaking up**,.... An house, in order to steal money, jewels, household goods, &c. or breaking through any fence, hedge, or wall of any enclosure, where oxen, or sheep, or any other creatures are, in order to take them away: the Targum of Jonathan is,

"if in the hole of a wall (or window of it) a thief be found;"

that is, in the night, as appears from the following verse, "if the sun", &c. to which this is opposed, as Aben Ezra observes; some render it, with a digging instrument {x}; and it is a Jewish canon {y}, that

"if anyone enter with a digging instrument: he is condemned on account of his end;"

his design, which is apparent by the instrument found upon him; for, as Maimonides {z} observes,

"it is well known, that if anyone enters with a digging instrument, that he intends, if the master of the house opposes him to deliver his goods out of his power, that he will kill him, and therefore it is lawful to kill him; but it does not signify whether he enters with a digging instrument, either by the way of the court, or roof;"

and be smitten that he die be knocked down with a club, by the master of the house, or

any of his servants, or be run through with a sword, or be struck with any other weapon, to hinder him from entrance and carrying off any of the goods of the house, and the blow be mortal: there shall no blood be shed for him: as for a man that is murdered; for to kill a man when breaking into a house, and, by all appearance, with an intention to commit murder, if resisted, in defence of a man's self, his life and property, was not to be reckoned murder, and so not punishable with death: or, "no blood" shall be "unto him" {a}; shall be imputed to him, the man that kills the thief shall not be chargeable with his blood, or suffer for shedding it; because his own life was risked, and it being at such a time, could call none to his assistance, nor easily discern the person, nor could know well where and whom he struck.

{x} trtxmb "cum perfossorio", Pagninus; "cum instrumento perfosserio", Tigurine version. {y} Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 8. sect. 6. {z} Comment. in ib. {a} Mymd wl Nya "non ei sanguines", Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius.

Exodus 22:3

Ver. 3. **If the sun be risen upon him**,.... Either upon the thief, or upon the master of the house, or the person that finds the thief and smites him that he dies; it matters not which it is interpreted, it is true of both, for when it is risen on the one, it is on the other:

[there shall be] blood [shed] for him; the person that kills him shall die for it: the Targum of Jonathan is,

"if it is as clear as the sun (and so Jarchi), that not to kill any he entered, and he should kill him, there is guilt of shedding innocent blood:"

because coming at broad daylight, and when the sun was up, it was a plain case he came not with a design to murder, but only to steal; besides, being at such a time, the master of the house could call for help and assistance, and take him; which is what is suggested he should do, and not take away his life, but oblige him, if he had got any of his goods, to restore them, as follows:

for he should makes full restitution; by returning them and as much more, as the following verse shows:

if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft, by the sanhedrim, or court, of judicature: as the Targum of Jonathan, before whom he should be brought, and the theft proved upon him, and unto the year of the remission or release, as the same

Targum; nor were such to be sold to strangers, or to serve forever, for they were to be dismissed after six years, as Josephus {b} observes: and it is a canon with the Jews {c}, that,

"an Hebrew servant whom the sanhedrim sell, they do not sell him but to an Israelite, or to a proselyte of righteousness;"

according to the Targum of Jonathan, it seems as if he was to be sold to the person from whom he stole, since it is,

"he shall he sold to him;"

but if not, however, the price he was sold at was to be given to him for a recompence of his loss; so says Maimonides {d},

"if he have not goods, neither movable nor immovable the sanhedrim sell him, and give the price to him that is injured, as it is said: "if he have nothing", &c. and adds, a man is sold for his theft but not a woman {e}:"

from hence it appears that theft was not a capital crime by the law of Moses: Draco is said to be the first who made it so; but his law being thought by the Athenians to be too severe, was annulled by them {f}: the law of the twelve tables, with the Romans greatly agrees with the Mosaic laws about theft; these permitted to kill a thief who should be taken in open theft, if either when he committed the theft it was night or if in the daytime, and he defended himself with weapons when about to be taken {g} or, as elsewhere expressed {h}, an open thief was delivered to servitude to him who was robbed, but nocturnal thief it was lawful to kill by the law of the twelve tables.

{b} Antiqu. l. 16. c. 1. sect. 1. {c} Maimon. Abadim. c. 1. sect. 3. {d} Hilchot Genubah, c. 3. sect. 11. {e} So Misn. Sotah, c. 3. sect. 8. {f} A. Gell Noct. Attic. l. 11. c. 18. {g} Ib. {h} Ib. l. 20. c. 1.

Exodus 22:4

Ver. 4. **If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive**,.... Or, "in finding be found" {i}, be plainly and evidently found upon him, before witnesses, as the Targum of Jonathan; so that there is no doubt of the theft; and it is a clear case that he had neither as yet killed nor sold the creature he had stolen, and to could be had again directly, and without any damage well as it would appear by this that he was not an old expert thief, and used to such practices, since he would soon have made away with this theft

in some way or another:

whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep, or any other creature; and even, as Jarchi thinks, anything else, as raiment, goods, &c.

he shall restore double; two oxen for an ox, two asses for an ass, and two sheep for a sheep: and, as the same commentator observes, two living ones, and not dead ones, or the price of two living ones: so Solon made theft, by his law, punishable with death, but with a double restitution {k}; and the reason why here only a double restitution and not fourfold is insisted on, as in [Ex 22:1](#) is, because there the theft is persisted in, here not; but either the thief being convicted in his own conscience of his evil, makes confession, or, however, the creatures are found with alive, and so more useful being restored, and, being had again sooner, the loss is not quite so great.

{i} aumt aumh "inveniendō inventum fuerit", Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator. {k} A. Gell, l. 11. c. 18.

[Exodus 22:5](#)

Ver. 5. If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten,.... Which is not his own, by putting cattle into it to feed upon it, as it is explained in the next clause:

and shall put in his beast, and shall feed in another man's field; do damage in one or both those two ways, either by his feet treading down the grass and fruits of the earth, which the Rabbins, as Jarchi says, think, is meant by putting in his beast; or with his beast eating up the same, which is intended by the latter phrase:

of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own vineyard, shall he make restitution for what damage is done by his beast in his neighbour's field or vineyard; and this held good of any garden or orchard injured in like manner; and it is a general rule with the Jews, that when any damage is sustained, he that does the damage is obliged to pay with the best the earth produces {l}, even though better than was the man's that suffered the loss, that for the future he might be more careful of doing injury to another {m}.

{l} Misc. Bava Kama, c. 1. sect. 1. {m} Bartenora in Misn. Gittin, c. 5. sect. 1.

[Exodus 22:6](#)

Ver. 6. **If fire break out**,.... Even though of itself, as Jarchi interprets it:

and catch in thorns a thorn hedge or fence, with which cornfields might be enclosed:

so that the stacks of corn, or the standing corn, or the field, be consumed [therewith]; whether it be corn cut down, bound up in sheaves, and laid up in heaps or stacks, or whether it be yet growing, and not fully ripe, at least not cut down, or any other fruits of the field; if the fire that takes the thorns which are near them should reach to those, and kindle upon them and destroy them:

he that kindleth the fire, shall surely make restitution: that is, though he kindles the fire upon his own ground, yet being careless of it, it breaks out without his intention and design, and catches hold on a thorn hedge between him and his neighbour's field, and so spreads itself to the corn there, whether standing or in stacks, or to other fruits either lying or growing there; now, though he did not kindle the fire in the corn, and among the stacks or heaps of fruit in his neighbour's field, yet, for his carelessness in not looking after the fire he had kindled in his own field, he was to make good all the damages his neighbour sustained hereby: the Jewish canons relating to this affair are these;

"if a man kindles a fire by the hands of a deaf man, or a fool, or a child, he is free by human judgment, but he is bound by the judgment of heaven (that is, to make restitution); if he kindles it by the hand of a knowing and understanding man, he is bound; one brings fire and another "afterwards" brings wood, he that brings the wood is bound; one brings wood and another "afterwards" brings fire, he that brings the fire is bound; "after that", another comes and blows the flame (or fire), he is bound; "but if" the wind blows it they are all free; he that kindles fire and it consumes wood or stones, or dust, he is bound, as it is said,
[Ex 22:6](#) "if fire break out", &c. if the fire passes over a fence four cubits high, or a public road, or a river, he is free {n};"

those two things last mentioned, feeding on another man's field and fire, with the ox and the pit, observed in the preceding chapter, are with the Misnic doctors {o}, the four fathers' fountains, or sources of damages.

{n} Bartenora in Misn. Gittin, c. 5. sect. 4. {o} Ib. c. 1. sect. 1.

Exodus 22:7

Ver. 7. **If a man shall deliver unto his neighbour money or stock to keep**,.... Without

any reward for keeping it, as the Targum of Jonathan; and so other Jewish writers {p} understand this passage of such as keep a deposit freely, having nothing for it; whether it be money or goods, gold, silver, jewels, raiment, household stuff or any kind of vessels or instruments used in the house, or in trade; and also cattle, as appears from [Ex 22:9](#)

and if it be stolen out of the man's house; into whose custody it was delivered:

if the thief be found, let him pay double: the worth of what is stolen, agreeably to the law in [Ex 22:4](#) that is, if it was found in his hands; but if he had disposed of it, then he was to pay five fold or four fold, as in [Ex 22:1](#), and so runs the Jewish canon {q},

"if anyone delivers to his neighbour a beast or vessels, and they are stolen or lost, he shall make restitution; but if he will not swear, for they say, one that keeps for nothing, may swear and be free; then if the thief should be found he shall pay double; if he has killed or sold, he shall pay four fold or five fold: to whom shall he pay? to him with whom the depositum is: if he swears, and will not pay, and the thief is found, he shall pay double; if he has killed or sold he shall pay four fold and five fold: to whom shall he pay? to the owner of the depositum."

{p} Jarchi in ver. 10. Bartenora in Misn. Shebuot, c. 6. sect. 5. {q} Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 3. sect. 1.

[Exodus 22:8](#)

Ver. 8. If the thief be not found,.... And so no account can be given of the goods deposited, what is become of them, and it becomes a doubtful case whether they have been stolen or embezzled, and there is suspicion of the latter:

then the master of the house shall be brought unto the judges: here called Elohim, gods, because they were God's vicegerents, and represented him, and acted under his power and authority; and who at this present were Moses, and those that judged the people under him, and afterwards the seventy elders, and all such who in succeeding times were judges in Israel, and bore the office of civil magistrates; before these the master of the house, or the person who had any goods committed to his care, and they were lost, was to be brought and put to his oath, and upon it examined, in order to find out what was become of the goods committed to him: to see whether he has put his hand to his neighbour's goods: took them to himself, made use of them, or disposed of them to his own advantage, and which was no other than a kind of theft.

Exodus 22:9

Ver. 9. **For all manner of trespass,....** With respect to what is committed to a man's trust, and it is lost to the owner of it, there must be somewhere or other a trespass committed, either by the person into whose hands it was put, or by a thief that has stolen it from him:

whether it be for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, or for any manner of lost thing by which it appears that either of these, or any other cattle not named, as well as money and vessels, or household goods, or goods in trade, were sometimes, or might be lodged in the hands of another as a depositum for safety or convenience; and for which, or any other so deposited, and lost,

which another challengeth to be his, or affirms that he put into the hands of his neighbour, to be kept by him for him; "or who shall say this is he", or "he is" the person into whose hands I put it, or this is "it" {r}; such and such were the thing or things I delivered to him:

the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; who were to hear what each party had to say, and to examine the witnesses each of them brought, and consider the nature of the evidence given, and to judge and determine:

and whom the judges shall condemn; or "pronounce wicked" {s}, as having done a wicked thing; either the one as having brought a false accusation against his neighbour, charging him with a depositum he never had, or the other as having converted it to his own use:

he shall pay double unto his neighbour; either the depositor, who pretended to be so and was not, but brought a false charge against his neighbour, or a false witness, as Jarchi, such as one was to pay double to the person charged wrongfully; or, on the other hand, the person with whom the depositum was put, if it appeared that he had acted a fraudulent part, and abused his trust, then he was to pay double to the depositor.

{r} hz awh yk rmay rva "qui dixerit quod illud hoc", Montanus; "quum dixerit illud ipsum esse", Junius & Tremellius; "de qua dixerit aliquis illum ipsum esse", Piscator; so Ainsworth. {s} Neyvry Vid. Ainsworth.

Exodus 22:10

Ver. 10. **If a man deliver to his neighbour an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast to keep,**.... And he keeps it without a reward, as the Targum of Jonathan; but Jarchi and Aben Ezra more rightly interpret this of one that keeps for hire, as herdsmen, shepherds, &c. The Jews say {t} there are

"four sorts of keepers; he that keeps for nought (or freely), he that borrows, he that takes hire, and he that hires; he that keeps for nought swears in all cases (and is free), he that borrows pays for all (that is lost or stolen, &c.) he that takes hire, and he that hires, swear on account of that which is torn, or carried away, or dies, and they pay for that which is lost or stolen,"

which are the cases after supposed:

and it die; either of the above, or any other under the care of another; that is, dies of itself, not being killed by any, and its death sudden, and not easily accounted for:

or be hurt; receive any damage in any part, though it die not; or "be broken" {u}; have any of its limbs or bones broken; or be torn by a wild beast, as the Targum of Jonathan adds:

or driven away; from the flock or herd by thieves or robbers, or rather carried captive by an enemy in an hostile way, see [Ex 22:12](#):

no man seeing it; die, or be hurt, or carried off; and so, as the above Targum paraphrases it, there is no witness that sees and can bear witness, that is, to any of the said things which have happened to it.

{t} Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 7. sect. 8. {u} rbvn "confractum", Pagninus, Montanus; "fractum", Junius & Tremelius, Piscator, Drusius; so Ainsworth.

Exodus 22:11

Ver. 11. **Then shall an oath of the Lord be between them both,**.... Either by the one, the keeper, for the satisfaction of the owner, or by them both; by the owner, that he delivered such and such cattle to the keeper; and by the keeper, that he was no ways concerned in the death, hurt, or carrying off of the same: and this is called "the oath of the Lord", not only because in this law required by him, but because sworn by him, or in his name, and made before him, in his presence, who is hereby appealed unto; and who is called upon to take vengeance on the person that takes the oath of perjury; and

such an oath only is a lawful one, men are to swear only by the Lord. But this oath was not tendered to anyone:

"if a man was suspected of an oath (i.e. of perjury) they might not give him his oath, neither the oath of the law, nor the oath from their words (the scribes), nor the oath of imposition (imposed by the wise men); and even though he that brought the action would have it, they might not hearken unto him: if a man has sworn falsely a rash oath, or an oath of testimony, or an oath concerning anything deposited, or a vain oath, lo, he is suspected of an oath, and so everyone that is rejected for witness on account of any transgression {w}."

The oath to be taken by the keeper, and who indeed seems to be the only person that was to take one, was, "that he hath not put his hand unto his neighbour's goods"; so as either to kill or maim, or drive away, or suffer to be driven away, any of the cattle committed to his care, or that he had not disposed of them to his own use and profit:

and the owner of it shall accept thereof; of the oath, as the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi, and so be satisfied, and give no further trouble, such an oath being for the confirmation of the thing, and to put an end to strife; or he shall take the ass, ox, or sheep, as it was, and be content; but then, though he might take the dead or maimed one, he could not take that which was driven or carried away, wherefore the first sense, is best:

and he shall not make [it] good; or pay for it to the owner what it was worth.

{w} Maimon. Hilchot Toan Venitan, c. 2. sect. 1, 2.

[Exodus 22:12](#)

Ver. 12. And if it be stolen from him,.... Or "but if" {x} it was taken away by theft; and that "from with him" {y}, as it may be literally rendered, from among his own cattle, and they not taken; and he being present, pretending to have an eye upon them and keep them, but was careless and negligent, at least, if he did not connive at the theft:

he shall make restitution to the owner thereof; for in such a case there was ground for suspicion of fraud; however, there was apparent carelessness, and it was but just he should make restitution, since he had hire or wages for keeping it; which is the reason Aben Ezra gives for it, and is suggested by the Targum of Jonathan; which adds to the former clause, by way of explanation,

"that which was with him to be kept for a reward."

{x} Ma yk "si autem", Drusius. {y} wmem "e cum eo", Montanus. Exodus 22:13Ver. 13. If it be torn in pieces,.... By some wild beast, at least as pretended:[then] let him bring it for witness; part of that which is torn, that it may be witness for him that it was torn, as in Am 3:12 as Aben Ezra observes; and so the Jerusalem Targum,"let him bring of the members of it a witness,"which would make it a clear case that it had been so used; but it is possible that the whole carcass might be carried off, and nothing remain to be brought as a proof of it; wherefore the Targum of Jonathan is,"let him bring witnesses;"and so some versions render it {z}; and to this agrees Jarchi, whose note is,"let him bring witnesses of its being torn by violence, and he is free,"such who saw it done; but it is before supposed, that such cattle may be hurt, broken, or maimed, no man seeing it, Ex 22:10 and therefore in such a case no witnesses could be brought, wherefore the first sense seems best:[and] he shall not make good that which was torn; or shall not pay for it, pay the price of it, as much as it is worth. Here Jarchi distinguishes,"there is that which is torn, for which a man pays, and there is that which is torn, for which he does not pay; that which is torn by a cat, or a fox, or a marten (a kind of weasel), he pays for, but that which is torn by a wolf, a lion, or a bear, he does not pay for:"the reason of which is, because it is thought the keeper might have preserved and delivered from the former, and therefore was culpable, when it was not in his power to save from the latter; and the Misnic doctors observe, that one wolf is not violence, but two are; so that what is torn by one, the keeper is bound to pay for, but not what is torn by more. But two dogs are not violence, unless they come from two different quarters, and then they are: a single thief is violence, and so is a lion, a bear, a leopard, a basilisk, and a serpent, and this only when they come willingly, and of themselves; but if they (the cattle) are brought to places where there are troops of wild beasts, and thieves, it is no violence {a}, and in such a case the keepers are liable to pay; and so unless he makes use of staves, and calls in other shepherds to his assistance, as Maimonides {b} observes, when it is in his power to do it; and so at least might make an attempt to save or rescue the cattle. {z} de whaby "adducet eum testem", Pagninus, Montanus; "adducat ille testem", Munster, Fagius. {a} Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 7. sect. 9. {b} Hilchot Shecirat, c. 3. sect. 6. Exodus 22:14Ver. 14. And if a man borrow [ought] of his neighbour,.... Any beast, as it should seem, as an ox to plough with, an ass, horse, or camel to ride on, though the Jewish writers carry it also to any kind of household stuff:and if he be hurt or die; if any damage comes to it, or it dies while it is in the borrower's hands, and when employed in that work for which he borrowed it; the Targum of Jonathan is,"and the vessel should be broke, or the beast die:"and the owner thereof being not with it; at the time of its being hurt, or of its death, and so could not be so well satisfied whether used well or not, nor how the damage and death came to it:he shall

surely make it good; pay the full price for it it is worth; which, though it may seem hard, was necessary, in order to make men careful of things they borrowed, and that lenders may not be losers for their kindness. Exodus 22:15 Ver. 15. But if the owner thereof be with it,.... When it is hurt or dies; for in some cases the owner might go along with his beast, being borrowed or hired to do work with it; or, however, being upon the spot, must be satisfied that it was not ill used; and it may be reasonably presumed he would do all he could to preserve it: and this being the case, he shall not make it good; that is, the borrower, but the loss would lie upon the lender; seeing this might have been the case if it had been at home, and not borrowed or lent. The Jewish writers understand all this in a different manner, that if the owner is not with it in the time of borrowing, though he is with it in the time of its being hurt, or of its death, the borrower must pay; but if he was with it in the time of borrowing, though not in the time of its receiving damage, or of its death, the borrower was free {c}; for, as Jarchi says, whether it be in that work (for which he was borrowed), or in another work (it matters not), if he was with it at the time of borrowing, there was no necessity of his being with it at the time of its hurt or death. The reason of which, I must confess, I do not understand; unless the meaning is, that it was necessary that the owner, and the beast, should be both borrowed or hired together; and which indeed seems to be the sense of the Misnah, or tradition {d}, which runs thus, "if a man borrows a cow, and borrows or hires its owner with it; or if he hires or borrows the owner, and after that borrows the cow, and it dies, he is free, as it is said, Ex 22:15 but if he borrows the cow, and afterwards borrows or hires the owner, and it dies, he is bound to pay, as it is said, Ex 22:13 if his owner is not with it, &c." If it be an hired thing, it came for its hire; that is, if the beast which was come to some damage, or was dead, was hired, and not borrowed, then, whether the owner was with it or not at that time, he could demand no more than hire, and the person that hired it was obliged to pay that and no more; or if the owner himself was hired along with his beast, and so was present when it received its damage, or its death, nothing more could come to him than what he agreed for. {c} Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 8. sect. 1. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. {d} Ibid. Exodus 22:16 Ver. 16. And if a man entice a maid, that is not betrothed,.... For one might be betrothed according to the custom of those times, and not be married, or the nuptials consummated, and so be yet a maid or virgin; but being betrothed, it made the case different, because such an one was as a wife to a man: but the case here supposed is of a maid not betrothed, and also not forced, but yielding to the solicitations of a man, as is implied by her being enticed; which signifies his gaining upon her affections, and obtaining her consent by expressing strong affection for her, and making large promises to her, and so both by words and gestures prevailing with her to yield to his desire: and lie with her; in a way of carnal copulation; and such an action between two single persons, by consent, is what is called simple fornication: if this was done in a field, the maid was supposed to be forced, since there she might cry out, and not be heard; but if in a city, she is supposed to be enticed, and consent, since

if she cried out she might be heard; this the Jewish writers gather from De 22:23, though the law there respects a betrothed damsel: he shall surely endow her to be his wife; give her a dowry in order to be his wife, or, however, such an one as he would or must give if she became his wife, even one suitable to her rank and dignity, whether he married her or not; for he was not obliged to it whether he would or not, and in some cases could not if he would, as follows. Exodus 22:17 Ver. 17. If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him,.... For wife, either because of his character, family, or circumstances; or, however, being disagreeable to him on one account or another, and therefore will by no means agree to marry his daughter to him, and not only give him an absolute denial, but resolutely persist in it: the Targum of Jonathan has it, "if it seems not good to him;" if he do not like nor choose to marry her; and some add also, if she herself do not approve of marrying him: he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins; as virgins on marriage have usually given them, according to their rank and dignity: here is no sum fixed, but the Targum of Jonathan is, "he shall be mulcted in fifty shekels of silver," which is taken from De 22:29 though that seems to be not altogether a like case with this; for though it respects a virgin not betrothed, as here, yet one that has been forced, and therefore the man was obliged to marry her, and never put her away; and the mulct or fine was to be paid to the damsel's father and not to her: the Septuagint version here says, it was to be paid to the father. Exodus 22:18 Ver. 18. Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live. Such that had familiar spirits, and conversed with them, and by means thereof got knowledge of many things relating to persons, at least pretending they did; and who did or seemed to do many strange and surprising feats, as even to raise the spirits of departed persons, to converse with them and gain knowledge by them, though in reality they did not, and could not do such things, but used some juggling tricks to deceive the people, and in which they might be assisted by evil spirits; as appears from the case of the witch of Endor, who was surprised at the appearance of Samuel, it being out of the ordinary course of her art and practice really to bring up the spirit of a man deceased, whatever pretensions might be made to it; however, such being deceivers of the people, and leading them into unwarrantable practices, and off of a dependence on God and his providence, and from seeking to him, and asking counsel of him, they are by this law condemned to death, such an one was not to be suffered to live; not that it was lawful for anybody to kill her, or that any private person might or must do it that knew her, or took her to be a witch; but she was to be had before a court of judicature and tried there, and, if found guilty, to be put to death by the civil magistrate: so Jarchi's note is, "but she shall die by the house of judgment;" or the sanhedrim; for these words are spoken to Moses the chief judge, and to those that were under him, and succeeded him and them; though the Targum of Jonathan prefaces them thus: "and my people, the children of Israel, thou shalt not, &c." and though only a witch is mentioned, or this is only expressed in the feminine gender, because a multitude of this sort of people were found among women, as Ben Melech observes, and so Aben Ezra; yet wizards, or

men that dealt with familiar spirits, are included; and it may be reasonably concluded from hence, that if women, who generally have more mercy and compassion shown them, yet were not suffered to live when found criminal in this way, then much less men: and this law is thought by some to follow upon the other, concerning enticing and lying with a virgin not betrothed; because such sort of persons were made use of to entice and decoy maids to gratify the lusts of men. Exodus 22:19 Ver. 19

Whosoever lieth with a beast,.... In like manner as a man and woman, by carnal copulation; this is a crime so detestable and abominable, so shocking and dishonourable to human nature, that one would think it could never be committed by any of the human species, and that there was no occasion for making a law against it; but, such is the depravity and corruption of mankind, that divine wisdom saw it necessary, and, to deter from it, made it death, as follows; such an one shall surely be put to death; no mercy shown him, no pardon or respite given him by the civil magistrate: according to the Targum of Jonathan, the death of such a person was by stoning, for it paraphrases the words, "he shall be killed with the casting of stones." Exodus 22:20 Ver. 20. He that sacrificeth unto [any] god,.... To Elohim, to strange gods, to the idols of the people, as the Targum of Jonathan; to the Egyptian deities, to the gods of the Moabites, Amorites, Edomites, Canaanites, Philistines, or any other: Aben Ezra says the word Elohim comprehends angels; and by the exceptive clause it is plain it takes in all that had been, were, or ever would be the objects of idolatrous worship, especially the sun, moon, and stars, the principal objects of worship in those days: save unto the Lord only; the true and living God; Jehovah, the self-existent, immutable, and eternal Being; the Creator of all things, the possessor of heaven and earth, the most high God, and the only one: sacrificing takes in all the acts of service performed to an idol as to the true God, as offering incense, pouring out a libation, as well as slaying and burning an animal as Jarchi observes: he shall be utterly destroyed; be accursed, anathematized, devoted to destruction, as the word used signifies: the Targum of Jonathan is, "he shall be killed with the sword, and his goods consumed," not only lose his life but his substance, and so be destroyed in body and estate. Exodus 22:21 Ver. 21. Thou shall not vex a stranger,.... One that is not born in the same country, but comes into another country to sojourn, as Jarchi; not a native of the place, but of another kingdom or country; a stranger to the commonwealth of Israel, that is only in it for a time on trade and business, or through one providence or another; or else a proselyte is meant, not a proselyte of righteousness, who has embraced the true religion; but a proselyte of the gate, that takes upon him the commands of the sons of Noah; or, as Aben Ezra here expresses it, who takes upon him not to serve idols; such were allowed to dwell among the Israelites, and they were to carry it friendly and kindly to them, and "not vex" them, nor irritate them with words, as the Targum of Jonathan, and so Jarchi; by calling them names, Gentiles, uncircumcised persons, and the like; upbraiding them with their country, ignorance, and manner of life; they were not to say to a proselyte, as Ben Melech observes,

remember thy former works; or, if the son of a proselyte, remember thy father's works: nor oppress him; by taking his goods, as the above Targum, and so Jarchi; by refusing to assist him with advice or otherwise, to trade with him, or to give him lodging, and furnish him with the necessaries of life: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: out of which they were but just come, and therefore such a reason must be very striking and moving upon them: the Targum of Jonathan prefaces it, "and my people, the house of Israel, remember that ye were strangers, &c." this they could not have forgot in so short a time, and the remembrance of this should move their compassion to strangers hereafter, when they came to settle in their own land; and therefore, as they would that men should have done to them when in such circumstances, the same they should do to others; and besides, the remembrance of this would serve to abate their pride and vanity, and their overbearing disposition.

Exodus 22:22 Ver. 22. Ye shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. Who have no friends, husband, or father to be on their side and protect them, and are weak and helpless to defend themselves, and therefore it must be barbarous to do them any injury, either to their persons or property; no one ought to be afflicted and distressed by another, either in body or mind, or substance, and especially such as have no helper, not any to assist them and sympathize with them; for this is a law for every man, as Jarchi observes, is binding upon all; only the Scripture speaks of these, because of their weakness, and because they are more frequently afflicted than others, cruel and unmerciful men taking the advantage of their inability to defend themselves.

Exodus 22:23 Ver. 23. If thou afflict them in any wise,..... In any way, or by any means whatever; their minds, by reproaches, censures, insults, and their bodies by stripes, false imprisonment, &c. and in their substance, by withholding from them what belongs to them, taking what they have, or cheating and defrauding them in any respect; or, "in afflicting afflict them" {e}; afflict them much, and continue to do so: and they cry at all unto me; in prayer, as the Targum of Jonathan; or, "in crying cry" {f}; cry vehemently, or importunately, and with constancy, or rather, cry ever so little: I will surely hear their cry; the voice of their prayer, as the same Targum; or, "in hearing I will hear" {g}; will certainly take notice of their cries, and return an answer to them, by appearing on their side, and avenging their injuries; for God is the Father of the fatherless, and the husband of the widow, and the Judge of them both: the manner of speaking or form of expression is the same in all these clauses, the words being doubled. {e} hnet hne "affligendo afflixeris", Pagninus, Piscator, Ainsworth, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius. {f} qeuy qeu "clamando clamaverit", Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Ainsworth. {g} emva emv "audiendo audiam", Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Ainsworth.

Exodus 22:24 Ver. 24. And my wrath shall wax hot,.... Against those that afflict them, being so devoid of humanity, compassion, and tenderness, and so guilty of oppression and injustice, which are aggravated by the circumstances of the persons they ill treat, and therefore the more provoking to God: and I will kill you with the sword; with the sword of death, says the Targum of

Jonathan; it designs one of God's sore judgments, the sword of an enemy; the meaning is, that when such evils should become frequent among them, God would suffer a neighbouring nation to break in upon them in an hostile way, and put them to the sword; hence it follows:and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless; be in the same circumstances with those they have injured, and therefore should consider not only the destruction that would come upon themselves, being cutoff by the sword, but the case of their families; and how, could they be sensible of it, they would like to have their wives and children used as they have used the widows and fatherless. Exodus 22:25Ver. 25. If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, &c,] Such only need to borrow money, and to whom it should be freely lent, when it may be to the good of the borrower, and not any injury to the lender: this law, according to the Jewish writers, only respects Israelites, and not Gentiles; agreeably to which is Jarchi's note,"if thou lend, that is, not to a Gentile; and to which of my people? the poor, and to which of the poor? that is with thee:"thou shalt not be to him as an usurer; that will not lend without usury, nor without an exorbitant interest, and deals very hardly with the borrower if he is not punctual in the payment of it; the Israelites were not only not to be usurers, but they were not to be like them; they were not to require anything for lending a poor man a little money; as not any settled interest, so neither were they to take any previous gift or reward later, see Lu 6:34neither shalt thou lay upon him usury; or oblige him to give interest for money borrowed: it is in the plural, number, "neither shall ye lay"; and Aben Ezra observes, that the lender, scribe, and witness, all transgress this law; that is, when a man lends money on interest, and a bond is made by the scribe for it, and this signed by witnesses, all are guilty of the breach of it: yea, some Jewish writers {h} say, not only those, but whoever is a surety or bondsman for the payment, and even the borrower himself, See Gill on "Ps 15:5". {h} Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 5. sect. 11. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. Exodus 22:26Ver. 26. If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge,.... So that it seems that the lender, though he might not impose usury on the borrower, or oblige him to pay interest for what he lent him, yet for the security of his money he might take his clothes, either his bed clothes or wearing apparel, or any instruments or goods of his; but when he did, he was bound to what follows:thou shalt deliver it to him by that the sun goeth down; the reason of which appears in the next verse, with respect to his bed clothes, should that be the pledge: but Jarchi interprets it, not of his nocturnal clothes, but of his apparel in the daytime, and paraphrases it thus,"all the day thou shalt restore it to him until the setting of the sun; and when the sun is set, thou shalt return and take it until the morning of the morrow comes; the Scripture speaks of the covering of the day, of which there is no need at night;"but rather night clothes are meant by what follows. Exodus 22:27Ver. 27. For that is his covering only,.... All that he has to cover him, the only covering he has when he lies down to sleep; and therefore should be restored to him by the time of sunset, at which time he returns from his labour; and after some refreshment retires to his bed for rest,

when his covering will be necessary: it is his raiment for his skin; which is next to his skin, and covers his naked body, as it is when he lies down to sleep; and therefore if not returned, he must lie naked without any covering, which to deprive him of would be cruel: Jarchi interprets this covering of his shirt, but it rather means his bed clothes: the Septuagint version calls it the clothes of his shame, what cover and hide the shame of nakedness: wherein shall he sleep? what shall he have to sleep in if this is detained from him? nothing at all; or it may be read without an interrogation, wherein he should sleep, or was used to sleep: and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me; and complains of ill usage, that he has nothing to cover him in the night season, when he lies down to sleep, which is very uncomfortable, as well as unhealthful and dangerous: that I will hear; his cry and complaint, take notice of it, and resent the usage of him: for I am gracious; or merciful; and therefore everything cruel and uncompassionate is disagreeable, and even abominable to him, and he will take care in his providence that the injured person shall be redressed and the injurer punished.

Exodus 22:28 Ver. 28. Thou shalt not revile the gods,.... Meaning not the idols of the Gentiles, which they reckon gods, and worship as such; which is the sense of Philo, and some others, particularly Josephus {i}, who, to curry favour with the Roman emperors given to idolatry, has from hence inserted the following among the laws given to Moses; "let no man blaspheme the gods, which other cities think are such, nor rob strange sacred places, nor receive a gift dedicated to any deity;" but this cannot be the sense of the text, being contrary to De 12:2 nor can it be thought that care should be taken, lest the honour of the Heathen deities should be detracted from; but civil magistrates, the judges of the land, and the like, are meant, who are powers ordained of God, are in his stead, and represent him, and therefore respect should be shown them; nor should they be treated with any degree of slight and contempt, which may discourage and intimidate them, and deter them from the execution of their office: the Targum of Jonathan interprets them of judges very rightly, agreeably to Ps 82:1 and so Aben Ezra says, "they are the judges and the priests, the sons of Levi, with whom the law is:" nor curse the ruler of thy people whether civil or ecclesiastic; the last mentioned Jewish writer intend of the king, who is the supreme ruler in things civil, and ought to be honoured and loved, served and obeyed, and not hated and cursed, no, not secretly, not in the bedchamber, nor in the thought of the heart, since not only the thing is criminal but dangerous; it is much if it is not discovered, and then ruin follows upon it, Ec 10:20. The Apostle Paul applies it to the high priest among the Jews, who was the ruler in sacred things, Ac 23:5 and may be applicable to the prince of the sanhedrim, or chief in the grand court of judicature; and even to all dignified persons, who ought not to be spoken ill of, and to be abused in the execution of their office, and especially when they perform well. {i} Antiqu. 1. 4. c. 8. sect. 10. Contr. Apion. 1. 2. c. 33.

Exodus 22:29 Ver. 29. Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits,.... Which, according to Maimonides {k}, were of seven kinds only; for he says, "they do not bring the firstfruits, but of the seven kinds, said in the praise of the

land, (the land of Canaan), De 8:8 and they are wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates;"and how much of these were to be offered is not fixed by the law, but were left to the generosity of the people: the above mentioned writer asks {1}, "what measure do the wise men set? a good eye (or a bountiful man) brings one of forty (or the fortieth part of his fruits); a middling one (one that is neither liberal nor niggardly) brings one of fifty (or the fiftieth part); and an evil one (a covetous man) one of sixty (or the sixtieth part), but never less than that."Now this was not to be delayed, but to be brought as soon and as early as could be: the Jewish writers seem to understand this of postponing things, or inverting the order of them, bringing that first which should be last, and that last which should be first; so Jarchi interprets it, "thou shalt not change the order of their separation, to postpone that which should be first, and to put before that which should be last; for the first oblation should not be brought before the firstfruits, and the tithes before the first oblation."And thus runs one of their canons or traditions {m}, "if anyone brings the first oblation before the firstfruits, the first tithe before the first oblation, the second tithe before the first, it is as if he transgressed a negative precept: "thou shalt not delay or postpone", &c. Ex 22:29'And of thy liquors: and these, according to Maimonides {n}, were only the firstfruits of liquors of olives and grapes:the firstborn of thy sons thou shalt give unto me; which is a repetition of the law. See Gill on "Ex 13:2". {k} Hilchot Biccurem, c. 2. sect. 2. {1} Hilchot Trumot, c. 3. sect. 2. {m} Misn. Trumot, c. 3. sect. 6. {n} Biccurem, ut supra. ({k}) Exodus 22:30Ver. 30. Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen, and with thy sheep,.... That is, with the firstborn, which were to be set apart to the Lord; and so the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it, "the firstborn of thine oxen, and of thy sheep;"for having spoken of the firstborn of men, the Scripture proceeds to speak of the firstborn of cattle, great and small, the separation of which was enjoined in one and the same precept, Ex 13:2,seven days it shall be with his dam; whether it be a calf or a lamb; before it was seven days old it was not to be taken from it, and given to the Lord:on the eighth day thou shalt give it me; that is, they might do it then, but not before; yet they were not obliged to bring it exactly on that day, but they might do it any time within the month, and at a month's end they were obliged to redeem it, that is, give the priest the sum of five shekels for it, Nu 18:16. The Jewish canon runs thus {n}; "how long are Israelites bound for the bringing of the firstborn, i.e. before they offer it to the priest? in small cattle thirty days, in large cattle fifty days." {n} Misn. Becerot, c. 4. sect. 1. Exodus 22:31Ver. 31. And ye shall be holy men unto me,.... They were so by God's act of election, not special and particular, but general and national; choosing and separating them to be an holy people to him, above all the people on the face of the earth, and in a ceremonial sense they observing laws and appointments of God of this kind; which is the sense here intended, as appears by what follows: all men, and so these Israelites, ought to be holy in a moral sense, and some are holy in a spiritual and evangelical sense, being made holy by the Spirit of God; of these the Apostle Peter speaks, in allusion to this, and such like passages, 1Pe

2:9neither shall ye eat any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field; or in the house, as Jarchi notes; but the Scripture, as he observes, speaks of the place where it is more usual for beasts to tear, and so Aben Ezra; otherwise what is torn elsewhere, or by whatsoever accident it is bruised and maimed, was not to be eaten: ye shall cast it to the dogs: for even a stranger was not to eat of it, or if he did he was unclean, and was obliged to wash his clothes, and bathe himself, Le 17:15 and yet Jarchi interprets this figuratively of such as are like dogs, meaning the Gentiles, whom the Jews used to call so, see Mt 15:26. An Heathen poet gives instructions perfectly agreeable to this law;"do not (says he) eat flesh fed upon by beasts, but leave the remains to the swift dogs {o}."{o} mhde ti yhroboron &c. Phocylides, ver. 136, 137.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 23:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 23

This chapter contains several laws, chiefly judicial, relating to the civil polity of Israel, as concerning witness borne and judgment made of cases in courts of judicature, without any respect to poor or rich, and without the influence of a bribe, [Ex 23:1](#), concerning doing good to an enemy in case any of his cattle go astray, or fall under their burden, [Ex 23:4](#), and of the oppression of a stranger, [Ex 23:9](#), and then follow others concerning the sabbath of the seventh year, and of the seventh day, with a caution against the use of the names of idols, [Ex 23:10](#), next are laws concerning the appearance of all their males at the three feasts, [Ex 23:14](#), and concerning the slaying of the sacrifice of the passover, and bringing the first of the firstfruits of the land, [Ex 23:18](#) and then a promise is made of sending an angel to them to bring them into the land of Canaan, where they should carefully avoid all idolatry, and show a just indignation against it, and serve the Lord, and then it would be well with them, [Ex 23:20](#), and particularly it is promised, that the Lord would send his fear, and his hornets, before them, to destroy the inhabitants of the land, and drive out the rest by little and little, until they should possess the utmost borders of it, which are fixed, [Ex 23:27](#), and the chapter is concluded with a direction not to make a covenant with these people, or their gods, nor suffer them to dwell among them, lest they should be a snare unto them, [Ex 23:32](#).

Ver. 1. **Thou shalt not raise a false report**,.... Of a neighbour, or of any man whatever, either secretly by private slanders, whispers, backbiting and tale bearing, by innuendos, detracting from his good name and credit, suggesting things false and wicked concerning him; or publicly in a court of judicature, bringing a false accusation, laying a false charge, and bearing a false testimony against him: or "thou shalt not receive a false report" {p}; if there were not so many, that say, Report, and we will report it, that are ready to receive every ill thing of their neighbours, there would not be so many that would raise such ill things of them; everything of this kind should be discountenanced, and especially by judges in courts of judicature, who are chiefly spoken to and of in the context; these should not easily admit every charge and accusation brought; nor bear, or endure a false report, as the word also signifies, but discourage, and even punish it:

put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness; which is not a gesture used in swearing, such as with us, of putting the hand upon a book, which did

not obtain so early; nor is there any instance of this kind in Scripture; the gesture used in swearing was either putting the hand under the thigh, which yet is questionable, or lifting of it up to heaven; but here it is expressive of confederacy, of joining hand in hand to carry on a prosecution in an unrighteous way, by bearing false testimony against another; and such were to be guarded against, and not admitted to give evidence in a cause, even a man that is known to be a wicked man, or to have been an unrighteous witness before; on the one hand, a man should be careful of joining with him in a testimony that is unrighteous; and, on the other hand, judges should take care not to suffer such to be witnesses. The Jews say {q}, that everyone that is condemned to be scourged, or has been scourged for some crime committed, is reckoned a wicked man, and he is not to be admitted a witness, nor his testimony taken.

{p} avt al "non suscipies", V. L. Pegninus, Vatablus, Drusius, Fagius. {q} Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 3. sect. 3.

Exodus 23:2

Ver. 2. **Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil**,.... The Targums of Jerusalem and Jonathan add, but to do good. As in private life, the examples of the many, who are generally the most wicked, are not to be followed, though they too often are; examples, and especially of the multitude, having great influence, and therefore to be guarded against; so in public courts of judicature, where there are many judges upon the bench, if one of them is sensible that the greater part go wrong in their judgment of a case, he ought not to follow them, or be influenced by them, but go according to the dictates of his own conscience, and the evidence of things as they appear to him, and neither agree to justify the wicked, nor condemn the righteous:

neither shall thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment; or "thou shalt not answer" {r}; either in pleading in a cause, and taking the side of it the majority is on, and for that reason, though it is a manifest perversion of justice; or by giving a vote on that side, and on that account, whereby a wrong judgment passes; and this vote given either according to the number of witnesses, which ought not always to be the rule of judgment; for it is not the number of witnesses, but the nature, evidence, and circumstances of their testimony, that are to be regarded: Jarchi says, in judgments of life and death, they go after the mouth of one witness to absolve, and after the mouth of two to condemn: or according to the number of judges on the bench, and their superiority in years and knowledge; and so some render the word, "after the great ones" {s}; for a judge is not to be influenced by names or numbers in giving his vote, but to judge according to the truth of things, as they appear to him: hence the Jews say, that the younger or puisne judges used to be asked their judgment

first, that they might not be influenced by others superior to them; and a like method is taken with us in the trial of a peer, the younger lords always giving their opinion first: as to the number of votes by which a cause was carried in court, it is said {t}, not as the decline to good, is the decline to evil; the decline to good, i.e. to absolution, is by the sentence of one (a majority of one); the decline to evil, i.e. to condemnation, is by the mouth or sentence of two, a majority of two.

{r} hnet alw "neque respondeas", Tigurine version; "non respondebis", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius. {s} Mybr yrxa "post potentiores", Junius & Tremellius; "post magnos", Lyra, Cartwright. {t} Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 6.

Exodus 23:3

Ver. 3. **Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause.** Because he is a poor man, and for that reason endeavour to carry his cause for him, right or wrong, from a foolish pity to him as a poor man, and from an affectation of gaining the applause of people on that account; or "thou shalt not honour" or "adorn" a poor man {u}, by a set speech in favour of his cause, though wrong, dressed up in the best manner, and set off with all the colourings of art, to make it appear in the most plausible manner; the law is against respect of persons, as not the person of the rich, so neither is the person of the poor to be accepted, but the justice of their cause is to be regarded; so the Targum of Jonathan,

"the poor that is guilty in his judgment or cause, his face (or person) thou shalt not accept to have pity on him, for no person is to be accepted in judgment."

{u} rdht al "non honorabis", Pagninus, Vatablus, Drusius, Cartwright; "non decorabis", Montanus; "ne ornes", Tigurine version; "ne honorato", Junius & Tremellius; "ne ornato", Piscator.

Exodus 23:4

Ver. 4. **If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray,....** Or any other beast, as the Samaritan version adds; for these are only mentioned for instances, as being more common, and creatures subject to go astray; now when such as these are met going astray, so as to be in danger of being lost to the owner, though he is an enemy; or as the Targum of Jonathan,

"whom thou hatest because of a sin, which thou alone knowest in him;"

yet this was not so far to prejudice the finder of his beasts against him, as to be careless about them, to suffer them to go on without acquainting him with them, or returning them to him, as follows:

thou shalt surely bring it back to him again; whether it be an ox, or an ass, or any other beast, the law is very strong and binding upon the finder to return it to his neighbour, though an enemy, and bring it either to his field or to his farm.

Exodus 23:5

Ver. 5. **If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden**,.... Fallen down, and such a burden upon him that he cannot rise up again, but lies under it, and the owner of it is not able of himself to raise it up again:

and wouldst forbear to help him; show an inclination to pass on without giving him any assistance to get up his beast again; or "wouldst thou forbear to help him?" {w} as Jarchi, and others, read with an interrogation, could it be in thine heart to forbear helping him? couldest thou go on, and take no notice of him and his case, and not join him in endeavouring to get up his beast again, that he may proceed its his journey? canst thou be so cruel and hardhearted, though he is thine enemy? but if thou art, know this,

thou shalt surely help with him; to get up his ass again: hence the Jewish canon runs thus {x},

"if an ass is unloaded and loaded four or five times, a man is bound, i.e. to help, as it is said, "in helping thou shalt help"; if he (the owner) goes away, and sets himself down, seeing the command is upon thee, if it is thy will and pleasure to unload, unload, he is free; for it is said, with him; if he is an old man, or sick, he is bound, the command of the law is to unload, but not to load."

The words may be rendered, "in leaving thou shalt leave with him" {y}; either leave or forsake thine enmity to help him, as Onkelos; or leave thy business, thou art about, to lend him an hand to raise up his beast again.

{w} bzem tldxw "num desines sublevare eum?" some in Vatablus; "cessabis auxiliari ei?" Drusius; "desines auxiliari ei?" Pagninus. {x} Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 2. sect. 10. {y} "Deserendo desereres cum eo", Montanus; so Ainsworth.

Exodus 23:6

Ver. 6. **Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause.** As the poor man was not to be favoured when his cause was bad through an affected pity for him as a poor man, so his judgment was not to be wrested or perverted, when his cause was good, because of his poverty; which is too often the case, through the power of rich men, and the prevalence of their gifts and bribes, and to curry favour with them: the phrase, "thy poor", is very emphatic, and intended to engage judges to regard them, as being of the same flesh and blood with them, of the same nation and religion; and who were particularly committed to their care and protection under God, who is the Judge and protector of the poor, of the widow and the fatherless.

Exodus 23:7

Ver. 7. **Keep thee far from a false matter,**.... Or "word" {z}; from receiving a false testimony, or taking the false or wrong side of a cause, or engaging in a bad one; keep aloof off from it, as much at a distance from it as possible:

and the innocent and the righteous slay thou not; that is, do not condemn them to death, nor join with the majority in their condemnation, if they appear to be innocent and righteous; nor give orders, or join in giving orders to the executioner to put such to death. The Targum of Jonathan is,

"he that goes righteous out of the house of thy judgment (out of the sanhedrim, to which he belonged), and they find out his sin (afterwards), and he that goes out guilty, and they (afterwards) find out his righteousness, do not slay:"

for I will not justify the wicked: the wicked judge in pronouncing an unjust sentence on innocent and righteous men, or if they absolve wicked men, at the same time they put to death the innocent and righteous, God will not justify those wicked men cleared by them, but will, in his own time and way, sooner or later, inflict the deserved punishment on them: this is not contrary to [Ro 4:5](#) for though God justifies the ungodly, he does not justify ungodliness in them, or them in ungodliness, but from it, and that by the imputation of the righteousness of his Son.

{z} rqv rbdm "a verbo mendacii", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius, Junius & Tremellius, Tigurine version, Fagius.

Exodus 23:8

Ver. 8. **And thou shalt take no gift**,.... Of the persons whose cause is to be tried in a court of judicature before judges; neither of those on the one side nor on the other, neither before the trial nor after, neither by words, by a promise, nor by facts, by actually receiving money; and not even to judge truly, as Jarchi observes, neither to clear the innocent nor to condemn the guilty: a gift was not to be taken on any consideration whatever:

for the gift blindeth the wise; or the "seeing" {a}; the open ones, who used to have both their eyes and their ears open, and attentive to the cause before them; and yet a gift so blinds them, by casting such a mist before them, that they are inattentive to the true merits of the cause, and their affections and judgments are to be carried away in favour of those that have bribed them, as to pass a wrong sentence:

and perverteth the words of the righteous; either the sentences of righteous judges, as they ought to be, but a gift perverts their judgment, and they give a wrong decree; or the causes of the righteous that are brought before those are perverted by giving the cause to their adversaries, who are wicked men.

{a} Myxqp "videntes", Pagninus, Vatablus, Cartwright; "apertos", Montanus, Drusius.

Exodus 23:9

Ver. 9. **Also thou shall not oppress a stranger**,.... As these were not to be vexed and oppressed in a private manner and by private men, see [Ex 22:21](#) so neither in a public manner, and in a public court of judicature, or by judges on the bench when their cause was before them, by not doing them justice, showing a partiality to those of their own nation against a stranger; whereas a stranger ought to have equal justice done him as a native, and the utmost care should be taken that he has no injury done him, and the rather because he is a stranger:

for ye know the heart of a stranger; the fears he is possessed of, the inward distress of his soul, the anxiety of his mind, the tenderness of his heart, the workings of his passions, his grief and sorrow, and dejection of spirit: the Targum of Jonathan is,

""the groaning of the soul of a stranger": this the Israelitish judges knew, having had a very late experience of it:"

seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt; where they had been vexed and

oppressed, brought into hard bondage, and groaned under it; and therefore it might be reasonably thought and expected that they would have a heart sympathizing with strangers, and use them well, and especially see that justice was done them, and no injury or oppression of any kind.

Exodus 23:10

Ver. 10. **And six years thou shall sow thy land**, The land of Canaan, given to their ancestors and to them, and which they were now going to inherit; and when they came into it they were to plant it with vines and olives; or rather, these being ready planted, they were to prune and dress them; and they were to till their land, and plough it, and sow it with various sorts of grain, for six years running, from the time of their possession of it:

and shall gather in the fruits thereof; corn and wine, and oil, into their own garner, treasuries, and cellars, as their own property, to dispose of as they pleased for their own use and profit.

Exodus 23:11

Ver. 11. **But the seventh year thou shall let it rest, and lie still**,.... From tillage, and make its fruits common, as the Targum of Jonathan; the note of Jarchi is, "let it rest", from perfect tillage, as ploughing and sowing; "and lie still", from dunging and harrowing, or weeding: this law was intended to show that God was the original proprietor and owner of this land, and that the Israelites held it under him; and to teach them to depend upon and trust in his providence; as well as that there might be both rest for the land, and so it became more fruitful afterwards, having by this rest renewed its vigour, and also for servants and cattle; and that the poor might have an equal share in the fruits of the earth, and appear to be joint lords of it with others under God, as it follows:

that the poor of thy people may eat: that which grows up of itself, of which there were great quantities; for the sixth year bringing forth for three years, a great deal of seed fell, which grew up again; and especially, as through plenty they were not so careful to gather it all up; and besides this, there were the fruits of trees, of vines, olives, &c. which brought forth their fruit in course as usual, and which were all this year common to poor and rich; so that the former had an equal propriety and share with the latter:

and what they leave, the beasts of the field shall eat; signifying that there should be such plenty that there would be enough for all, and to spare; that there would be much left, and which should be the portion of the beasts of the field, and who would also be sufficiently provided for by the produce the earth brought forth of itself, as herbage, &c. and the fruits the poor left:

in like manner thou shall deal with thy vineyard, and with thy oliveyard; that is, these were not to be pruned, nor the grapes and olives gathered, but were to be in common with all: a larger account is given of this law in [Le 25:2](#).

Exodus 23:12

Ver. 12. Six days thou shalt do thy work,... That is, they might do what work they would on the six days of the week:

and on the seventh day thou shall rest; from all the work and labour done on other days, and give up themselves to religious exercises:

that thine ox and thine ass may rest; and so every other beast, as horses, camels, &c.

and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed; the former, the Targum of Jonathan, and so Jarchi, interprets, of one uncircumcised, and the latter, of a proselyte of the gate: this law is here repeated, partly to show that it is of the same kind with the former, namely, ceremonial and temporary; and partly, as Jarchi observes, lest it should be said, since all, the year is called the sabbath, there was no need to observe the weekly sabbath.

Exodus 23:13

Ver. 13. And in all [things] that I have said unto you, be circumspect,... Or observe them, be careful to keep them punctually and constantly, even all that are delivered in this and the preceding chapters:

and make no mention of the name of other gods; neither call upon them, nor swear by them, nor make vows to them; and, as little as possible, ever utter their names, and never with pleasure and delight, and showing any honour of them, and reverence to them, but with the utmost detestation and abhorrence:

neither let it be heard out of thy mouth; not any of their names; the same thing in

different words, the more to inculcate and impress the thing upon the mind, and to show with what vehemence and earnestness this is pressed.

[Exodus 23:14](#)

Ver. 14. **Three times thou shall keep a feast unto me in the year.** The feast of the passover, on the fourteenth of the month Nisan or March; and the feast of weeks or pentecost fifty days after that; and the feast of tabernacles on the fifteenth day of Tisri or September.

[Exodus 23:15](#)

Ver. 15. **Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread,**.... Which began on the fourteenth of the month Abib or Nisan, and lasted seven days, during which time no leavened bread was to be eaten by the Israelites, or to be in their houses, of which see the notes on:

See Gill on "Ex 12:15" See Gill on "Ex 12:18" See Gill on "Ex 12:19" See Gill on "Ex 12:10" See Gill on "Ex 13:6" See Gill on "Ex 13:7"

thou shall eat unleavened bread, seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; from the fourteenth of the month to the twenty first:

for in it thou camest out of Egypt; in such haste that there was no time to leaven the dough in the troughs; in commemoration of which this law was given, and this feast was kept:

and none shall appear before me empty; at this feast and the two following ones; for, besides the offerings and sacrifices appointed, at the feast of passover was brought a sheaf of the first fruits of the barley harvest; and at the feast of pentecost the two wave loaves or cakes of the first fruits of the wheat harvest; and at the feast of tabernacles they appeared with palm tree branches, and boughs of goodly trees, and poured out water fetched from Siloam, before the Lord: but to this appearance the Jewish doctors {b} say,

"there was no measure fixed; for everyone, if he would, might go up and appear, and go away: according to another interpretation, for the burnt offering of appearance, and the peace offerings of the Chagigah, which a man is bound to bring, as it is written, "ye shall not appear empty"; there is no measure from the law, as it is written, "a man

according to the gift of his hand", [De 16:17](#), but the wise men fix a measure; to the burnt offering a meah of silver, to the Chagigah two pieces of silver."

some understand this, not of their bringing anything with them to appear before the Lord with, but of what they should be blessed with there; even with the presence of God, and communion with him, and with the blessings of his grace and goodness; so that however they came, they should not remain, nor go away empty, and so have no cause to repent their appearance before him; but the former sense seems best.

{b} Bartenora in Misn. Peah, c. 1. sect. 1.

[Exodus 23:16](#)

Ver. 16. **And the feast of harvest**,.... This is the second feast, the feast of wheat harvest, between which and barley harvest were fifty days; or between the firstfruits of the one and the first fruits of the other were seven weeks, as Aben Ezra observes, and was sometimes called the feast of weeks; at which feast were to be brought,

the first fruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field; the two wave loaves or cakes, made of the first new wheat, which was the effect of their labour in tilling the field, and sowing it with wheat, and reaping it:

and the feast of ingathering, [which is] in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field; this is the third feast in the year to be kept, and was kept at the close of the year, at the revolution of it, when a new year began that is, according to the old account, which made Tisri the month in which this feast was kept, the first month of the year; whereas, according to the new count, it was the seventh month from the month Abib, now made the first of the months upon the Israelites coming out of Egypt in that month: this is the same feast with the feast of tabernacles, but here called the feast of ingathering, because at this time of the year all the fruits of the earth were gathered in; the corn, and wine, and oil, and all other fruits, on account of which there was great rejoicing, as there ought to be.

[Exodus 23:17](#)

Ver. 17. **Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord thy God**. In the city of Jerusalem, when they were come into the land of Canaan, and the temple was there built: here they were to show themselves before the Lord as being his, and devoted to his service; concerning which the Misnic doctors have the following canon

{c},

"all are bound to appear except a man deaf and dumb, a fool, a little one, one of neither sex, or of both sexes, women, servants not free, the lame, the blind, the sick, an old man, and he that cannot go on his feet."

{c} Misn. Chagigah, c. 1. sect. 1.

Exodus 23:18

Ver. 18. **Thou shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread**,.... This belongs to the feast of the passover; for, as all the Jewish writers agree, this sacrifice is the sacrifice of the passover, as it is sometimes called, see [Ex 12:27](#) now when the paschal lamb was killed, and its blood shed, and its flesh eaten, there was to be no leaven along with it; it was to be eaten with unleavened bread, and there was to be no leaven in their houses at this time; nay, it was not to be slain until all was removed: this was the first thing the Jews did, as soon as the fourteenth day was come, to search for leaven, remove and burn it; and this sense of the law is confirmed by the Targum of Jonathan, which is, "not a man shall slay, while there is leaven in your houses, the sacrifice of my passover;" and to the same purpose is the note of Jarchi: neither shall the fat of my sacrifice remain until the morning; and indeed no part of the passover lamb was to remain until the morning, what did was to be burnt with fire, Ex 12:10 the Targum of Jonathan is, "neither shall there remain without the altar the fat of the sacrifice of my passover until the morning, nor of the flesh which ye ate in the evening;" and so Jarchi interprets it of its not remaining without the altar. Exodus 23:19 Ver. 19. The first of the first fruits of thy land,.... Both of the barley and wheat harvest, and of the wine and oil; yea, Jarchi says, the seventh year was obliged to first fruits; and Josephus {d} relates, that the Jews were so tenacious of this law, that even in the famine in the time of Claudius Caesar, the first fruits were brought to the temple, and were not meddled with: thou shall bring into the house of the Lord thy God; to the tabernacle, during the standing of that, and the temple when that was built; which were the perquisites of the priests who officiated in the house and service of God: so Pliny says {e} of the ancient Romans, that they tasted not of the new fruits or wines before the first fruits were offered to the priests, which seems to have been borrowed from hence: thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk: and so a calf, or a lamb {f}, as Jarchi interprets it; which some understand of slaying a young kid and its dam together, and so is a law against cruelty, like that law of not taking the dam with the young, on finding a bird's nest, De 22:6 others, of killing, dressing, and eating a kid, while it sucks the milk of its mother, before it is eight days old, and so a law against luxury; but the Jews generally understand it of boiling, or eating the flesh

of any creature and milk together {g}: so the Targum of Onkelos paraphrases it, "ye shall not eat flesh with milk;" and the Targum of Jonathan is, "ye shall neither boil nor eat the flesh and the milk mixed together:" hence, according to the rules they give, the flesh of any beast, or of a fowl, is not to be set upon a table on which cheese is (being made of milk), lest they should be eaten together; nor may cheese be eaten after flesh until some considerable time, and then, if there is any flesh sticks between a man's teeth, he must remove it, and wash and cleanse his mouth; nor may cheese be eaten on a table cloth on which meat is, nor be cut with a knife that flesh is cut with {h}: so careful are they of breaking this law, as they understand it: but the words are, doubtless, to be taken literally, of not boiling a kid in its mother's milk; and is thought by many to refer to some custom of this kind, either among the Israelites, which they had somewhere learnt, or among the idolatrous Heathens, and therefore cautioned against; Maimonides and Abarbinel both suppose it was an idolatrous rite, but are not able to produce an instance of it out of any writer of theirs or others: but Dr. Cudworth has produced a passage out of a Karaite author {i}, who affirms, "it was a custom of the Heathens at the ingathering of their fruits to take a kid and seethe it in the milk of the dam, and then, in a magical way, go about and besprinkle all their trees, fields, gardens, and orchards, thinking by this means they should make them fructify, and bring forth fruit again more abundantly the next year:" and the Targum of Jonathan on Ex 34:26 seems to have respect to this, where, having paraphrased the words as here quoted above, adds, "lest I should destroy the fruit of your trees with the unripe grape, the shoots and leaves together:" and if this may be depended upon, the law comes in here very aptly, after the feast of ingathering, and the bringing in the first fruits of the land into the Lord's house. {d} Antiqu. l. 3. c. 15. sect. 3. {e} Nat. Hist. l. 18. c. 2. {f} Vid. T. Bab. Cholin. fol. 114. 1. {g} Tikkune Zohar, Correct. 14. fol. 26. 1. {h} Schulchan Aruch, par. 2. Yore Deah, Hilchot Bashar Bechaleb, c. 88. sect. 1. & 89. sect. 1. 4. {i} Apud Gregory's Notes & Observ. c. 19. p. 97, 98. Exodus 23:20 Ver. 20. Behold, I send an angel before thee,.... Not a created angel, but the uncreated one, the Angel of God's presence, that was with the Israelites at Sinai, and in the wilderness; who saved, redeemed, bore, and carried them all the days of old, whom they rebelled against and tempted in the wilderness; as appears by all the characters after given of him, which by no means agree with a created angel: Aben Ezra observes, that some say this is the book of the law, because it is said, "my name is in him", or "in the midst of it"; others say, the ark of the covenant; but he says this angel is Michael; and if indeed by Michael is intended the uncreated angel, as he always is in Scripture, he is right: Jarchi remarks, that their Rabbins say, this is Metatron, whose name is as the name of his master; Metatron, by gematry, is Shaddai, which signifies almighty or all-sufficient, and is an epithet of the divine Being; and Metatron seems to be a corruption of the word "mediator": some of the ancient Jewish writers say {k}, this is the Angel that is the Redeemer of the world, and the keeper of the children of men: and Philo the Jew {l} applies the word unto the divine Logos, and says, "he (God) uses the divine

Word as the guide of the way; for the oracle is, "behold, I send my Angel", &c."which agrees with what follows:to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared; to preserve the Israelites in their journey through the wilderness, from all their enemies that should set upon them, and to bring them safe at last to the land of Canaan, which he had appointed for them, and promised to them, and had prepared both in his purpose and gift for them, and would make way for their settlement in it by driving out the nations before them. {k} In Zohar in Gen. fol. 124.

4. {l} "De migratione" Abraham, p. 415. Exodus 23:21 Ver. 21. Beware of him,.... Of his face or countenance; observe his looks towards you in a providential way, whether frowning or smiling; observe his directions and instructions, laws and commands:and obey his voice; hearken to what he says, and cheerfully, readily, and punctually do as he orders:provoke him not; by unbelief, by murmurings and complaints, by unbecoming words and actions, by transgressing his commands, and acting contrary to his will;for he will not pardon your transgressions: or suffer them to pass unchastised and uncorrected, but will, as he did, take vengeance on their inventions, and on them because of them, though he forgave their iniquities; for that he was such an Angel as could forgive sin, which none but God can do, is evident; because it would be absurd to say he will not pardon, if he could not pardon their transgressions, see Mt 9:6,for my name is in him; the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father; the nature and perfections of God are in the Word and Son of God, and so his name Jehovah, which is peculiar to him; Christ is Jehovah our righteousness: or "though my name is in him" {m}; as Abendana and others, his name the Lord God, gracious and merciful, pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin, as afterwards proclaimed in him; and yet, notwithstanding this, he would not clear the guilty, or suffer the Israelites to go unpunished, if they offended him: the Targum of Onkelos is,"or in my name is his word,"he is my ambassador and speaks in my name. {m} ymv yk "quamvis nomen menum", Drusius. Exodus 23:22 Ver. 22. But, if thou shall indeed obey his voice,.... Or "hearkening hearken", {n} to it attentively, listen to it, and diligently and constantly observe and obey in whatever he shall direct and order:and do all that I speak; by him; or whatsoever he had spoke, or was about to speak; for as yet all the laws and statutes were not delivered, especially those of the ceremonial kind:then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries; which they should either meet with in their passage through the wilderness, or when they came into the land of Canaan; signifying hereby that he would protect them from them, subdue them under them, and give them victory over them, as that they should be utterly destroyed, and so way made for their possession of their land, as in the following words. {n} emvt ewmv "audiendo audieris", Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius, Piscator. Exodus 23:23 Ver. 23. For mine Angel shall go before thee,.... The same as before described:and bring thee in unto the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Canaanite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite; six nations are only mentioned, though there were seven; the Girgashites are omitted, though added in the Septuagint

version; and this omission of them might be, either because they were swallowed up by one or other of the other nations, particularly the Amorites, who were the most powerful; or rather, having mentioned the most and chiefest, the Lord was not careful, as Aben Ezra observes, to take notice of the least:and I will cut them off; from being a nation, either of them; for though there were some of them left, and dwelt about in the land, yet not as a kingdom and nation of themselves, as they had been, but became tributary to the Israelites. Exodus 23:24Ver. 24. Thou shalt not bow down to their gods,.... In a way of honour to them, doing them reverence, expressing thereby an high esteem of them, trust in them, and expectation of good things from them;nor serve them: in any kind of service in which they usually are served by their votaries; as by offering sacrifice, incense, libations, &c. or by praying to them or praising of them, or in whatsoever way they are served by idolaters:nor do after their works; the works of the worshippers of idols; all those wicked works in general done by them, which should not be imitated; and those particularly relating to the service and worship of their deities:but thou shalt overthrow them; the heathen gods; utterly destroy them, and break them to pieces, or demolish their temples, the idolatrous houses built for them, and their altars; for the word has the signification, of demolishing buildings, and razing up the very foundations of them:and quite break down their images; or, "in breaking break down" {o}; utterly and entirely break them down, break them to shivers, all their statues of gold or silver, brass, wood, or stone, or of whatsoever materials they were made; none were to be spared, nor any remains of them to be seen, that they might not prove a snare to any to worship them; and hereby they were to express their detestation of idolatry, and their strict and close adherence to the true God, and the worship of him as follows. {o} rbvt rbv "confringendo confringes", Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius, "perfringendo perfringito", Piscator. Exodus 23:25Ver. 25. And ye shall serve the Lord your God,.... And him only, who had brought them out of Egypt, and done so many great and good things for them at the Red sea, and now in the wilderness; by which he appeared to be the true Jehovah, the one and only living God, and to be their God in covenant, who had promised them much, and had performed it; and therefore was in a special and peculiar manner their God, and they were under the highest obligations to serve and worship him in the way and manner he directed them to:and he shall bless thy bread and thy water; and make them nourishing and refreshing to them, and preserve them thereby in health, as well as prosper and succeed them, and increase their worldly substance:and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee; the stroke of bitterness, or the bitter stroke, as the Targum of Jonathan, any grievous disease, which is bitter and distressing; signifying that there should be none among them, but that they should be healthful, and free from distempers and diseases. Exodus 23:26Ver. 26. There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren in the land,.... There shall be no abortions or miscarriages, nor sterility or barrenness, either among the Israelites, or their cattle of every kind, so that there should be a great increase, both of men and

beasts: the number of thy days I will fulfil; which was fixed for each of them, in his eternal purposes and decrees; or what, according to the temperament of their bodies and the course of nature, which, humanly speaking, it might be supposed they would arrive unto; or generally the common term of human life, which, in the days of Moses, was threescore years and ten, or fourscore, see Job 14:5, it may be considered whether any respect is had to the time of their continuance in the land of Canaan, the term of which was fixed in the divine mind, or the fulness of time in which the Messiah was to come. Exodus 23:27 Ver. 27. And I will send my fear before thee,.... What should cause fear among the nations of the land of Canaan; either the hornets mentioned in the next verse as the explanative of this; or the fame of his mighty works, which he had done for Israel in Egypt, at the Red sea, and in the wilderness; which struck the inhabitants of Canaan with such a panic, that they were ready to faint and melt away, and lost all courage, Jos 2:9 and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come; that is, the greatest part of them: and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee; flee away, not being able to face them and stand a battle, or, however, not stand it long, but run and make their escape: "or I will give thee the neck of them" {p}; cause them to submit, to lay down their necks and be trampled upon; an expression denoting their subjection, and an entire conquest of them, see Ps 18:39. {p} Pre-yttm "et dabo-cervicem", Pagninus, Montanus; "exponam tibi cervicem", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; "ponam ad te cervicem", Drusius. Exodus 23:28 Ver. 28. And I will send hornets before thee,.... Which may be interpreted either figuratively, and so may signify the same as fear before which should fall on the Canaanites upon hearing the Israelites were coming; the stings of their consciences for their sins, terrors of mind, dreading the wrath of the God of Israel, of whom they had heard, and terrible apprehensions of ruin and destruction from the Israelites: Aben Ezra interprets it of some disease of the body, which weakens it, as the leprosy, from the signification of the word, which has some affinity with that used for the leprosy; and so the Arabic version understands it of a disease: or rather, the words are to be taken literally, for hornets, which are a sort of wasps, whose stings are very penetrating and venomous; nor is it any strange or unheard of thing for people to be drove out of their countries by small animals, as mice, flies, bees, &c. and particularly Aelianus {q} relates, that the Phaselites were drove out of their country by wasps: and Bochart {r} has shown that those people were of a Phoenician original, and inhabited the mountains of Solymi; and that this happened to them about the times of Joshua, and so may probably be the very Canaanites here mentioned, as follow: the wasps, in Aristophanes's comedy which bears that name, are introduced speaking of themselves, and say, no creature when provoked is more angry and troublesome than we are {s}: which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite, from before thee; which three are mentioned instead of the rest, or because they were more especially infested and distressed with the hornets, and drove out of their land by means of them. {q} Hist. Animal. l. 11. c. 28. {r} Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 4. c. 13. col. 541. {s}

Aristoph. Vespae, p. 510. Exodus 23:29 Ver. 29. I will not drive them out from before thee in one year,.... This is observed before hand, lest the Israelites should be discouraged, and fear they should never be rid of them; and it was so ordered in Providence for the following reason:lest the land become desolate; there being not a sufficient number of Israelites to replace in their stead, to repeople the land, and to cultivate it; and yet their number was very large, being, when they came out of Egypt, as is generally computed, about two millions and a half, besides the mixed multitude of Egyptians and others, and during their forty years in the wilderness must be greatly increased:and the beast of the field multiply against thee; there being so much waste ground for them to prowl about in, they would so increase as to make head against them, and be too many for them; or, however, it would be difficult to keep them under control: the Targum of Jonathan adds, "when they shall come to eat their carcasses (the carcasses of the Canaanites slain in war), and may hurt thee." Exodus 23:30 Ver. 30. By little and little I will drive them out from before thee,.... Not the beasts of the field, but the inhabitants of Canaan, who were left partly to keep up the cities and towns, that they might not fall to ruin, and to till the land, that it might not be desolate; and partly to be trials and exercises to the people of Israel, and to prove whether they would serve the Lord or not. Just as the corruptions of human nature remain with the people of God when converted, for the trial and exercise of their graces, and that they may have their dependence not on themselves, but on the grace of God to keep them in his ways, and to preserve them safe to eternal glory; and by completing the work of grace, which is gradually done, they might be made meet for it:until thou be increased, and inherit the land; for as their enemies were driven out gradually, by little and little, so they multiplied gradually, until at length they became a sufficient number to fill all the cities and towns in all the nations of Canaan, and take an entire possession of it, as their inheritance given unto them by God. Exodus 23:31 Ver. 31. And I will set thy bounds,.... The bounds of the land of Canaan, which in process of time it should reach unto, though not at once, not until the times of David and Solomon, 2Sa 8:1 which bounds were as follow:from the Red sea even unto the sea of the Philistines: the Red sea was the boundary eastward, as the sea of the Philistines, or the Mediterranean sea, was the boundary westward:and from the desert unto the river; the desert of Shur or Arabia, towards Egypt, was the boundary southward, as the river Euphrates was the boundary northward, and is the river here meant, as the Targum of Jonathan expresses it; and so Jarchi interprets it, and generally others:for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; the greater part upon their entrance into it, and settlement in it, and the rest afterwards:and thou shalt drive them out before thee; not all at once, but by degrees, as before observed. Exodus 23:32 Ver. 32. Thou shalt make no covenant with them,.... A covenant of peace, a league, a confederacy, so as to take them to be their allies and friends; but they were always to consider them as their enemies, until they had made an utter end of them; though the Gibeonites by craft and guile obtained a league of them; but the methods they took to get it show they had

some knowledge of this law, that the Israelites might not, or at least would not, make any league or covenant with the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. This may be also extended to marriage covenants, which they were forbid to make with them; which yet they did, and proved a snare to them, for this brought them to makes a covenant with their gods, and serve them, which is here also forbidden:nor with their gods; making vows unto them, promising to serve them, if they would do such and such things for them. Exodus 23:33Ver. 33. They shall not dwell in thy land,.... The land of Canaan, given by God for an inheritance, and now would be in the possession of the Israelites; and therefore were not to suffer the old inhabitants to dwell with them in it, at least no longer than they could help it; they were to do all they could to root them out:lest they make thee sin against me; by their ill examples and persuasions, drawing them into idolatry, than which there is no greater sin against God, it being not only contrary to his law, his mind, and will, but directly against his nature, being, perfections, and glory:for if thou serve their gods, or "for thou wilt serve" {t}; this would be the consequence of their dwelling in the land, they would draw the Israelites into the worship of their idols, to which they were naturally prone; and should they commit idolatry,it will surely be a snare unto thee: idolatry would be the cause of their ruin and destruction, they would be snared by it, as fishes in a net, or birds and beasts by traps and gins; or "for it will be a snare" {u}, that is, the Canaanites dwelling among them would be a snare to draw them into their idolatry, and go into ruin. {t} dbet yk "quia servies", Malvenda. {u} hyhy yk "quia erit", Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 24:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 24

In this chapter we have an account that Moses was ordered to come up to the Lord alone, [Ex 24:1](#), but that before he did go up, he related to the people all the above laws delivered to him, which they promised obedience to, and so a covenant was made between God and the people by sacrifice, and by the sprinkling of blood, [Ex 24:3](#), upon which he and Aaron, and his two sons and seventy elders of Israel, went up part of the mountain, and had a vision of God, [Ex 24:9](#), when Moses with Joshua was called, and went up higher, until at length he entered into the cloud where the Lord was, and continued forty days and forty nights, [Ex 24:12](#).

Ver. 1. **And he said unto Moses**,.... Who said? no doubt a divine Person, and yet what this Person said is,

come up unto the Lord; meaning either to himself, or one divine Person called to Moses to come up to another: according to the Targum of Jonathan, it was Michael, the prince of wisdom; not a created angel, but the eternal Word, Wisdom, and Son of God; who said this on the seventh day of the month, which was the day after the giving of the law, or ten commands; though Jarchi says this paragraph was before the ten commands, and was said on the fourth of Sivan; but the Targumist seems most correct:

come up unto the Lord, thou and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; Nadab and Abihu were the two eldest sons of Aaron, [Ex 6:23](#) and the seventy elders were not all the elders of Israel, but were so many of them selected out of them, the chief and principal; who were heads of tribes and families, and were no doubt many, if not all of them, of those who by the advice of Jethro were chosen to be rulers of thousands, hundreds, and fifties; these were called to come up to the Lord on the mountain, but not to the top of it, only Moses went thither:

and worship ye afar off: from the people, and even at a distance from Moses; for he only was admitted near to God, as the following verse shows.

[Exodus 24:2](#)

Ver. 2. **And Moses alone shall come near the Lord**,.... Into the cloud where he was,

and talk with him face to face, as a man talketh with his friend; which was great nearness indeed, and a peculiar favour and high honour was this:

but they shall not come nigh; Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel:

neither shall the people go up with him; not any of them, much less the whole body. It seems, by this account, that Moses had been down from the mount after he had received the laws recorded in the two preceding chapters; though as yet he had not related them to the people, but did before he went up again by the above order, as appears from what follows.

Exodus 24:3

Ver. 3. And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments,.... Which according to Jarchi were the seven commands given to the sons of Noah, the laws concerning the sabbath, and honouring parents, the red heifer, and the judgments at Marah; but all these they were acquainted with before, excepting that of the red heifer, and the law, for that was not yet delivered to Moses, nor were these the ten commands, for they had heard them from the Lord themselves; but they doubtless were the judgments, or judicial laws, which he was ordered to set before the people, contained in the two preceding chapters, which were chiefly of the judicial kind, and related to the civil polity of the people of Israel:

and all the people answered with one voice; one speaking for, and in the name of the rest, or they all lift up their voice together, and being unanimous in their sentiments, expressed them in the same words:

and said, all the words which the Lord hath said will we do; that is, they would be careful to observe all the laws, statutes, judgments, and commands which the Lord had enjoined them; and less than this they could not say, for they had promised Moses, that if he would draw nigh to God, and hear what he should say, and deliver it to them, they would hearken to it, and obey it, as if they had heard God himself speak it; only they entreated the Lord would speak no more to them, as he did the ten commands, it being so terrible to them.

Exodus 24:4

Ver. 4. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord,.... Jarchi says, all from the

creation, to the giving of the law, and the commands at Marah; but though these were written by him, yet not at this time; but as Aben Ezra more truly observes, what are mentioned in this "parashah", or section, or what is contained in the two preceding chapters, he not only related to them from his memory, but he wrote them in a book, which is after mentioned, that they might be seen and read hereafter; for these were not the ten commands, they were written as well as spoken by the Lord himself, but the judicial laws before mentioned:

and rose up early in the morning: not on the fifth of Sivan, as Jarchi, the day before the giving of the law, but on the eighth of that month, two days after it:

and built an altar under the hill: under Mount Sinai, about the place where the bounds were set, beyond which the people were not to go:

and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel: to answer to them, and which were to represent them, as seems by the following account; these probably were made of marble stone, of which Mount Sinai consisted, and of which there was plenty thereabout.

[Exodus 24:5](#)

Ver. 5. **And he sent young men of the children Israel,**.... To the altar under the hill he had these young men, according to Jarchi, were the firstborn of the children of Israel; and so the Targums Onkelos and Jonathan; and the latter adds,

"for unto this hour the worship was among the firstborn, as yet the tabernacle of the covenant was not made, and as yet the priesthood was not given to Aaron."

But though this is a notion that has obtained among learned men, both Jews and Christians, it has been called in question by some, who have such reasons against it, as are not easily refuted. And very probably, as the seventy elders were such as were selected from the senior and graver part of the people, so these were choice young men, that were separated from others for this service, without any regard to birthright:

which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the Lord; by way of thankfulness; and such were used at making covenants, when the parties ate and drank together. The Vulgate Latin version has it, "twelve calves", without any authority for it.

[Exodus 24:6](#)

Ver. 6. **And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins,**.... Half of the blood of the above sacrifices, this he put into basins, and set by, in order to sprinkle on the people:

and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar; the Targum of Onkelos adds, to atone for the people. But the altar here seems to represent the Lord, who was one of the parties covenanting, and therefore is sprinkled with blood as a ratification of the covenant on his part, and the promises of it.

[Exodus 24:7](#)

Ver. 7. **And he took the book of the covenant,**.... Which contained the words of the Lord he is said to write, [Ex 24:4](#), and consisted both of laws and judgments required of the people, and to which they had given their assent, and promised obedience to; and of promises made by the Lord of sending his angel before them to guide them in the way, and bring them to Canaan, and to drive the Canaanites from thence, and put the Israelites into the possession of it; so that here were promises on both sides, a restipulation of parties, which made a formal covenant:

and read in the audience of the people; he had rehearsed what was contained in it from his memory, by word of mouth, to which they had assented, [Ex 24:3](#) and having written the same in a book, he read it to them distinctly, that they might the better take notice of the contents of it:

and they said, all that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient; which is a repetition and confirmation of what they had before said, and is expressed in stronger terms; so that this was not done suddenly and inconsiderately, and yet they seem not to be so well apprised of their own inability to keep the laws of God, and of the treachery of their own hearts as to their regard to them; see [De 5:28](#).

[Exodus 24:8](#)

Ver. 8. **And Moses took the blood,**.... The other half of the blood which was in the basins:

and sprinkled it on the people; not on the whole body of the people, who could not be brought nigh enough, and were too numerous to be all sprinkled with it; though the

apostle so expresses it, a part being put for the whole, [Heb 9:19](#) either this was sprinkled on the young men that offered the sacrifices in the name of all the people; or on the seventy elders, as the heads of them, so Aben Ezra; or upon the twelve pillars, which answered to the twelve tribes, and represented them as the altar did the Lord:

and said, behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words; being a ratification of the covenant on both sides, having been sprinkled both upon the altar, and upon the people. In allusion to which, the blood of Christ is sometimes called the blood of sprinkling, and which, sprinkled upon the mercy seat, calls for pardon for men; and sprinkled on their consciences, speaks peace and pardon to them, and cleanses from all sin; and sometimes the blood of the everlasting covenant, the covenant of grace made with him, by which it is ratified and confirmed; and our Lord may have regard to this rite and mode of expression in [Mt 26:28](#).

[Exodus 24:9](#)

Ver. 9. Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu,.... After the above things were done, the words of the Lord were told the people, and the book of the covenant read unto them, to which they agreed, sacrifices were offered, and the blood of them sprinkled on the altar, and on the people. The Samaritan version adds to these, Eleazar and Ithamar, the two younger sons of Aaron:

and seventy of the elders of Israel, who were called up to the mountain to the Lord, [Ex 24:1](#).

[Exodus 24:10](#)

Ver. 10. And they saw the God of Israel,.... The Targum of Jonathan restrains this to Nadab and Abihu whereas it is doubtless true of Moses and Aaron, and the seventy elders, who all saw him, and who were witnesses to the people that it was a divine Person that spoke to Moses, and delivered the laws unto him, to be observed by them; which seems to be the reason of their being called up, and favoured with this sight which must not be understood as of anything criminal in them, as if they curiously looked and pried to see something they should not, for which they deserved some sort of punishment, as the Targum intimates; but of a privilege, and a very high one they were favoured with: and this sight they had was not by a vision of prophecy, or with the eyes of their understanding, but corporeally; they saw the Son of God, the God of Israel, in an human form, as a pledge and presage of his future incarnation, who is the

Angel that spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, as Stephen says, and the Lord that was among the angels there, who afterwards became incarnate, and having done his work on earth, ascended on high, [Ac 7:38](#)

and [there was] under his feet; which shows that there was a visible form, and that human; nor is this contrary to what is said, "ye saw no similitude"; [De 4:12](#), since what is here related does not respect the same time, nor the same persons; this was after the giving of the ten commands, that at the time of it; this is said of the seventy elders, with Moses, Aaron, and his two sons, that of all the people:

as it were paved work of a sapphire stone: like a pavement pitched with sapphire. The Septuagint version is,

"and they saw the place where the God of Israel stood, and what were under his feet, as the work of a sapphire brick."

The sapphire stones, of which the pavement was, were as broad as bricks, and being like a brick, was a memorial, as the Targum of Jonathan says, of the servitude the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with in clay and bricks; but being a sapphire, bright and glorious, may denote the liberty they now enjoyed in exchange for their bondage. And the Targum of Jonathan understands it of the colour, and not of the form of the sapphire, and renders it, the white sapphire; and so do some Jewish writers {w}; though the colour of the sapphire is azure, or sky coloured, with which agrees what follows:

and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness; and Ruaeus {x} says, the sapphire is sky coloured, and some of them shine and sparkle with golden points or spots, and are reckoned the best sapphires; so that this represents the heaven as quite clear and serene, bespangled with stars; and as the heavens, covered with clouds, may denote the displeasure of God, so a serene heaven his favour and good will, and in such an amiable light was he now beheld.

{w} Saadiah Gaon in Aben Ezra, & R. Jonah in Ben Melech in loc. {x} De Gemmis, c. 2.

[Exodus 24:11](#)

Ver. 11. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand,.... Which some interpret of his hand of prophecy, and of the measure of the Spirit, such an one as Moses had, and by virtue of which he lived forty days and nights without eating

and drinking; but these not having such a measure of the Spirit, were obliged to eat and drink to support nature, as in the next clause: but it is rather to be understood of the hand of God; he did not inflict any disease or death upon them on their sight of him, it being a notion that no man could see God and live; but these men did live, not only Moses, and Aaron and his two sons, but the seventy elders, who were the principal choicest persons among the children of Israel; wherefore the Targum of Jonathan wrongly restrains this to Nadab and Abihu:

also they saw God, and did eat and drink: though they saw God, they continued alive and well, and in good health, of which their eating and drinking were a sign and evidence; or they ate, as Abendana, the sacrifices of the peace offerings, which were usually eaten by the priests and the people; and as a feast was common at covenant making, here was a feast kept by the elders, the representatives of the people, when they covenanted with God. Onkelos favours this sense,

"and they rejoiced in their sacrifices, which were accepted with good will, as if they had ate and drank."

Exodus 24:12

Ver. 12. **And the Lord said unto Moses, come up to me into the mount,**.... For as yet Moses was not got up to the top of the mount, only up some part of it with the elders, though at some distance from the people: but now he is bid to come up higher:

and be there; continue there, as he did six days after this:

and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that is, the law of the ten commandments, which were written on tables of stone by the Lord himself; he had already spoken them in the hearing of the people, but now he had wrote them, and that in tables of stone; partly for the duration of them, and partly to represent the hardness of the hearts of the Israelites, the stubbornness of their wills to comply with his law, their contumacy and obstinate persistence in disobedience to it:

that thou mayest teach them; these being in hand and sight, would have an opportunity of explaining them to them and inculcating them on their minds, and pressing them to yield an obedience to them.

Exodus 24:13

Ver. 13. **And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua,**.... In order to go up higher on the mount. Joshua, and he only, was to go up higher with him, though not to the top of the mount, at least not into the cloud upon it, as Moses did. Joshua was his minister or servant, and waited upon him wherever he went, and was to be his successor; and therefore for his encouragement, and to qualify him the better for it, he was indulged with a sight and knowledge of things others were not; for by his not knowing anything of the idolatry of the golden calf,

[Ex 32:17](#) it appears that he was on some part of the mount all the forty days and forty nights; and if it should be asked whether he fasted all that time, or, if he did not, how he was provided with food and drink? it may be replied, that there is no necessity to suppose that he fasted all that time; and it is easy to imagine how he was supplied, for the manna fell round about the mountain, of which he might gather and eat day by day, as Aben Ezra observes; and there was a brook which descended out of the mount, from whence he might have water, [De 9:21](#)

and Moses went up into the mount of God; Mount Sinai, where he had formerly appeared to him in a bush, and now had descended on it to give the law, and was still upon it, where his glory was seen; and therefore might, with great propriety, be called the mount of God; to the top of which Moses was preparing to go, but before he went gave the following instructions.

Exodus 24:14

Ver. 14. **And he said unto the elders,**.... The seventy elders which were selected out of the several tribes of Israel, and now about to return to the camp:

tarry ye here for us; meaning himself and Joshua, who was going with him:

until we come again unto you; perhaps Moses might not know how long his stay would be at the top of the mount, but supposed it would be some time by the provision he makes for hearing and adjusting cases in his absence:

and behold, Aaron and Hur are with you; Hur is not mentioned before, as being with Moses and the rest; but doubtless he was, at least it is highly probable he was one of the seventy elders of him,
See Gill on "Ex 17:10".

if any man have any matters to do: any cases to be considered, any cause to be tried in difference between him and another man, and which cannot be determined by the

inferior judges, is too difficult for them to take in hand:

let him come unto them; bring his case before them, and have their advice and opinion, and be determined by them.

Exodus 24:15

Ver. 15. And Moses went up into the mount,.... To the top of it, and as it seems alone, leaving Joshua behind in a lower part of the mountain:

and a cloud covered the mount; in which cloud Jehovah was.

Exodus 24:16

Ver. 16. And the glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai,.... The divine Shechinah or Majesty, some visible token of it, an exceeding great brightness and splendour:

and the cloud covered it six days; either the glory of the Lord, so that it could not be seen it had been; or the mount, as Jarchi; but that is observed before, unless repeated for the sake of the time it covered it, six days; or him, Moses, as some in Jarchi, who for six days together was covered with a thick cloud, so that he was not seen by any while on the mountain; and thus he remained, until he was admitted into the immediate presence of God, for which he was now preparing: what he did, or was made known to him during this time, is not said; it is probable his thoughts were employed about the glory and greatness of the divine Being; and as he was abstracted from earthly men and things, he was more at leisure to contemplate on divine and heavenly things, and so was more fitted for an intercourse with God, and had more courage and presence of mind to enter into it:

and on the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud; in which the glory of God was, and which seems to favour the first sense of the preceding clause, that it was the glory of God the cloud covered.

Exodus 24:17

Ver. 17. And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount,.... For when God spoke out of the cloud, the glory of the Lord flashed out like devouring fire; it was not devouring fire, but it was like it; it was like a great

blaze of fire, which consumes all that is in its ways; it was such a large body of light, and so clear and bright, that it looked like devouring flames of fire; and being upon the top of the mount was very visible, and seen at a great distance in the eyes of the children of Israel throughout, their camp.

Exodus 24:18

Ver. 18. **And Moses went into the midst of the cloud**,.... Where the glory of God was, and he must at this time be endowed with more than ordinary courage to enter into it, when the glory of the Lord flashed out of it like flames of fire; yet being called of God he was not intimidated, but with great serenity and composure of mind, as may be thought, he went into the presence chamber of the most High, to hear what he had to say unto him:

and gat him up into the mount; that is, he went into the cloud, after he had ascended the summit of the mount; for it cannot be supposed that he first went into the cloud, and then got himself up to the mount, which yet our version, if not carefully guarded against, may lead unto:

and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights; without eating or drinking; and just such a term of time Christ fasted in the wilderness; it is probable that the six days before mentioned are to be reckoned part of those forty days, since it is not said that he was in the cloud forty days and forty nights, but in the mount. The Targum of Jonathan adds,

"learning the words of the law from the mouth of the Holy One, whose name is to be praised."

Living without food so long must be ascribed to a miracle; for Hippocrates {y} that great physician, says, that

"those who remain without food seven days, thenceforward, if they would, cannot receive any support from food, because then the belly will not admit of any;"

and gives this reason for it, because the fasting intestine coheres, or is wrinkled.

{y} Lib. de Carn. in fine, apud Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 2. p. 196.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 25:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 25

In this chapter an order is given for a freewill offering towards various things for the worship and service of God, and the materials to be offered, which would be useful and acceptable, are mentioned particularly, [Ex 25:1](#), as also another order to build a sanctuary for God, after a model that he would give, [Ex 25:8](#), and, an ark to put in the law on tables of stone, the fashion of which, and the various things belonging to it, are described, [Ex 25:10](#), and a mercy seat with cherubim on it to be set over the ark, where the Lord promises to meet Moses and commune with him, [Ex 25:17](#) and a table with various appurtenances to it to place the shewbread on, [Ex 25:23](#) and a candlestick of gold, whose parts are described, and all the instruments relative to it, [Ex 25:31](#).

Ver. 1. **And the Lord spake unto Moses**,.... When on the mount, and in the midst of the cloud with him:

saying; as follows.

[Exodus 25:2](#)

Ver. 2. **Speak unto the children of Israel**,.... That is, when he should go down from the mountain to the camp:

that they bring me an offering; the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan call it a "separation": something separated from their substance, and devoted to the service of God, and for the use of the sanctuary afterwards to be built:

of every man that giveth it willingly, with his heart, ye shall take my offering; or take what was offered to him, be it more or less, and of whatsoever person, high and low, rich and poor, so be it it is freely given from the heart; not grudgingly or through force, as the Targum of Jonathan adds; and in such manner did David and his people many hundreds of years after this offer towards building of the temple, and the vessels belonging to that, see [1Ch 29:6](#) according to the Jewish writers, none but the children of Israel were to offer to this service, and only such who knew what they did; for thus they criticize on the words,

"speak unto the children of "Israel": this exempts an Heathen and an idolater; "of every man"; this excludes a little one; "that giveth it willingly with his heart"; this exempts a deaf and dumb man, and a fool, because they have no knowledge to offer freely {z}"

however, this we may learn from hence, that whatever we do for the worship and service of God, we should do it freely, cheerfully, and cordially; for God loves a cheerful giver; and if this was required under the legal dispensation, it is much more necessary and obligatory under the Gospel dispensation, and more suitable to it where all things are done and given freely of God, and such large blessings of grace are liberally bestowed by him on persons undeserving.

{z} Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Trumot, c. 1. sect. 1.

Exodus 25:3

Ver. 3. **And this is the offering which ye shall take of them**,.... That is, some one or other of the following things were to be taken of each of them that had a heart, and it was in the power of their hands to give; it was not expected that something of each of these should be had of everyone, but every man was to give, and it was to be received of him, what of these would suit him best to bestow, some one thing, some another, as they were possessed of, and had a heart to give; and for which service many of them were abundantly supplied with what they had brought out of Egypt; and as it was the Lord that gave them favour in the eyes of the Egyptians to lend or give them the riches they had, they were under the greater obligation to part with somewhat of it freely for his service; and especially as it would be to the spiritual profit and advantage both of them and theirs:

gold and silver, and brass; "gold", for those things that were to be made of gold; as the mercy seat and cherubim, the candlestick, &c. or were covered with it, as the ark, the shewbread table, and other things; and silver, for those that were made of that, as the silver sockets to the boards of the tabernacle, the silver trumpets, &c. and "brass" for the altar of burnt offering, its pans, shovels, basins, rings, and staves, and other things: Aben Ezra rightly observes, that no mention is made of iron, there being no use of that for anything in the tabernacle to be made of it; as also there was not in the temple of Solomon, and where there was not so much as a tool of iron heard in it while it was building, [1Ki 6:7](#) it may be, because instruments of war, slaughtering weapons, were made of iron; and to show that God is the God of peace in his sanctuary, and so in all the churches: gold and silver vessels the Israelites borrowed or begged of the Egyptians, and brought them with them when they came out of Egypt, [Ex 11:2](#).

Exodus 25:4

Ver. 4. **And blue, and purple, and scarlet,**.... The Jewish doctors are much divided about the sense of the words so rendered by us; some will have one colour, and some another meant; but, according to those learned men, who have taken much pains in searching into the meaning of them, as Bochart and Braunius, it appears that our version of them is most correct: and by these we are not to understand the colours themselves, which could not be brought, nor even the materials for dying them are intended; but wool, or clothes, either silken or linen of those colours: of the former the apostle has taught us to expound them, [Heb 9:19](#) and so Jarchi interprets them of wool thus died, and Josephus {a} also; which was made up into yarn, and wove, and was much used in the garments of the priests, in the curtains of the tabernacle, and in the vail between the holy and the most holy place:

and fine linen; the best of which was made in Egypt only, as Aben Ezra says, and much wore there, especially by the priests; and they had such an abundance of it that they traded to other nations with it, see [Isa 19:9](#) and of which the Israelites might bring a considerable quantity with them out of Egypt; and

goats' [hair]; though the word hair is not in the text, it is rightly supplied, as it is by the Septuagint version, and others, for not goats themselves, but their hair must be meant; of this the curtains for the covering of the tabernacle were made; Jarchi interprets it the down of goats, the short, small, fine hair that grows under the other.

{a} Antiqu. l. 3. c. 6. sect. 1.

Exodus 25:5

Ver. 5. **And rams' skins died red,**.... Of these were made a covering for the tent or tabernacle:

and badgers' skins, which were for the same use: the Septuagint version calls them hyacinth or blue skins; according to which, they seem to be the rams' skins died blue; and so Josephus {b} seems to have understood it; and it is much questionable whether the same creature is meant we call the badger, since that with the Israelites was an unclean creature; nor is its skin made use of for shoes, or well could be, as the skin of this creature is said to be, [Eze 16:10](#). Jarchi says it was a kind of beast only at that

time; and Aben Ezra says, it was known in those days but not now: and

shittim wood; supposed by the Jewish writers, as Kimchi {c}, and Ben Melech from him, to be the best and most excellent kind of cedar: Aben Ezra conjectures, and he delivers it but as a conjecture, that there might be near Mount Sinai a forest of "shittim" trees; and while the Israelites were there they cut them down for booths, which they might carry with them when they removed from thence; for, he says, Moses did not speak of the tabernacle till after the day of atonement: and since Acacia is by much the largest and the most common tree of the deserts of Arabia, as Dr. Shaw {d} observes, he thinks there some reason to conjecture, that the "shittim wood", whereof the several utensils of the tabernacle, &c. were made, was the wood of Acacia: and long ago it was the opinion of Cordus {e} that the "shittim wood" was the Acacia of Dioscorides; and it is the same with the Senton or Santon of the Arabians, which is the Egyptian thorn that grows in the wilderness, of which Herodotus {f} says, they cut wood of two cubits out of and make ships of burden of it: this is said to grow in the parts of Egypt at a distance from the sea; in the mountains of Sinai, at the Red sea, about Suez, in the barren wilderness; which circumstances seem to determine it to be the "shittim wood" {g}: some places where it might grow in plenty seem to have had their names from it, see

[Nu 25:1](#).

{b} Ut supra. (Antiq. l. 3. c. 6. sect. 1.) {c} Sepher Shorash. rad. jwv {d} Travels, p. 144. Ed. 2. {e} Apud Drus. Heb. Adag. Decur. 3. Adag. 4. {f} Euterpe, sive, l. 2. c. 96. {g} Vid. Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 2. p. 204.

[Exodus 25:6](#)

Ver. 6. **Oil for the light**,.... For the light of the lamps in the candlestick: this was oil olive, as the Targum of Jonathan, and so Jarchi, see [Ex 27:20](#),

spices for anointing oil; for the anointing of Aaron and his sons, and the tabernacle and its vessels, such as pure myrrh, sweet cinnamon, sweet calamus, and cassia:

and for sweet incense; as stacte, onycha, and galbanum; from whence they had this oil and these spices, it is not easy to say, unless they brought them out of Egypt with them; which is likely, since the deserts of Arabia could not furnish them with them.

[Exodus 25:7](#)

Ver. 7. **Onyx stones**,.... So called from their likeness to the nail of a man's finger: the Targum of Onkelos calls them stones of beryl; and the Targum of Jonathan gems of beryl; and the Septuagint version, stones of sardius; and some take them to be the sardonyx stones, which have a likeness both to the onyx and to the sardius:

and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate; two onyx stones were set in the ephod, one of the garments of the high priest, and an onyx stone, with eleven other precious stones, were set in the breastplate of the high priest: these stones were doubtless among the jewels set in gold and silver the Israelites had of the Egyptians, and brought with them out of Egypt.

Exodus 25:8

Ver. 8. **And let them make me a sanctuary**,.... An holy place to dwell in, and so called from his dwelling in it, as follows:

that I may dwell amongst them; in the midst of them, where the tabernacle was always placed; and there he dwelt as their King and their God, to whom they might have recourse on all occasions, and whom they should serve and worship; this sanctuary was to be made of many of the materials before mentioned by the Israelites, whom Moses should employ, and to whom he should give directions for the making it, according to the pattern showed him: and so the Jewish writers interpret "make me", or "to me", i.e. of mine, of mine holy things, things sanctified and separated to his use; and they bring this passage to prove that the workmen in the temple were to be paid only out of the holy things, or money given for the repair of it {h}: this was a type of the human nature of Christ, the true sanctuary and tabernacle which God pitched and not man, and in which the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily; and of the church of God, the temple of the living God, among whom he walks, and with whom he dwells, **Heb 8:2**.

{h} Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Temurah, c. 7. sect. 1.

Exodus 25:9

Ver. 9. **According to all that I show thee**,.... That is, the sanctuary was to be made in all respects exactly according to the view of it that Moses now had upon the mount from God, and which he was to communicate to the workmen for their instruction and direction;

after the pattern of the tabernacle, and of the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it: and by the "pattern" is not meant an idea of it, impressed on the mind of Moses, or a picture of it which was shown him, but a little edifice representing it in all its parts, a perfect model of it: and so Maimonides {i} says, "Tabnith", the word here used, signifies the structure and disposition of anything, i.e. the form of it in a four square, in roundness, in a triangle, or in any of the like figures, see [Heb 8:5](#) and so David had, by the Spirit, a pattern of the temple, and which he gave to his son Solomon, to build according to it, [1Ch 28:11](#).

{i} Moreh Nevochim, par. 1. c. 3.

[Exodus 25:10](#)

Ver. 10. **And they shall make an ark of shittim wood,**.... A chest or coffer to put things into, and into this were to be put the two tables of stone on which the law was written, and it was to be made of the wood before mentioned, [Ex 25:5](#) this was a very eminent type of Christ, with whom the name of an ark, chest, or coffer where treasure lies, agrees; for the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and the riches of grace, even all the fulness of it, lie in him; and all the epithets of this ark are suitable to him, as when it is called the ark of God, the ark of his strength, the glory of God, the face of God, Jehovah, and God himself, the holy ark, and ark of the covenant: and its being made of "shittim wood", which is an incorruptible wood, a wood that rots not, by which the Septuagint version here, and in [Ex 25:5](#) and elsewhere render it, may denote the duration of Christ in his person, and the natures united in it; in his divine nature, from everlasting to everlasting, he is God; in his human nature he saw no corruption, and though he died he lived again, and lives for evermore; in his offices, as Mediator, Redeemer, Saviour, prophet, priest, and King, he abideth for ever; and in his grace and the fulness of it, which, like himself, is the same today, yesterday, and forever:

two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof; if this cubit was a common cubit, consisting of a foot and a half or eighteen inches, then the length of this ark was forty five inches, and its breadth and height twenty seven each; according to Dr. Cumberland {k}, the Egyptian and Jewish cubit was above twenty one inches, and then the ark must be fifty three inches long or more, and thirty two and three quarters broad and high, or more: and Josephus {l} says, the length of it was five spans, and the breadth and height of it three spans each.

{k} Of Scripture Weights and Measures, ch. 2. p. 34, 56. {l} Antiqu. 1. 3. c. 6. sect. 5.

Exodus 25:11

Ver. 11. **And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold,**.... Not gild it, but put a plate of pure gold over it:

within and without shalt thou overlay it; so that nothing of the wood could be seen: this may denote the glory of Christ in both his natures, divine and human, the riches of his person and office, which are unsearchable and durable, and his preciousness to them that believe, [So 5:10](#),

and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about: or a cornish of pure gold upon it, every way, which was a square on which the mercy seat was set; which may point at the honour and glory of Christ, especially in his kingly office, who has indeed on his head many crowns; one a crown of pure gold, his divine Father has set upon him; another which the church has crowned him with, and indeed both angels and saints cast their crowns at his feet, and set the crown on his head, or give him the glory of all they have and are.

Exodus 25:12

Ver. 12. **And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it,**.... For which a mould was to be made, and the gold being melted was poured into it, and so the rings were fashioned:

and put them in the corners thereof; or, "in its feet", as Aben Ezra, though Jarchi says it had no feet; but as the word used so signifies always, it is more probable it had feet; and the rather, that it might not stand upon the ground, but on feet, as chests and coffers usually do:

and two rings shall be in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it; Jarchi says, at the upper corners, near the mercy seat were they placed, two on one side and two on the other, at the breadth of the ark; but it is more likely they were fixed in the lower part of it, as Ramban, at the feet of it; and in the length of the ark, as Josephus writes {m}.

{m} Antiqu. l. 3. c. 6. sect. 5

Exodus 25:13

Ver. 13. **And thou shall make staves of shittim wood**,.... Of the same, wood the ark was made of, see [Ex 25:5](#) and overlay them with gold; cover them with plates of gold, so that they appeared to be all of gold, the wood being not to be seen.

Exodus 25:14

Ver. 14. **And thou shall put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark**,.... This shows for what use the rings were; namely, to put the staves into them and the use of the staves thus put was,

that the ark might be borne with them; which staves overlaid with gold, and put into golden rings, figured the ministers of Christ, enriched with the gifts and graces of his Spirit, and possessed of the truths of the Gospel, more precious than gold and silver; who bear the name of Christ, and carry his Gospel into the several parts of the world.

Exodus 25:15

Ver. 15. **The staves shall be in the rings of the ark**,.... Not only be put into them, but remain in them, yea, always:

they shall not be taken from it; or, as the Septuagint version is, be immovable; so that those gold rings in the ark may signify the churches of Christ, which are instrumental to bear his name, and spread his truth in the world, comparable to rings for their circular form, being the purest and most perfect bodies of men on earth, and to gold rings for their worth and value, preciousness, excellency, and duration; and with whom the ministers of the Gospel, comparable to golden staves, are always to be, and never depart from them: or else they may signify the perfect and precious doctrines of Christ, in which his ministers are always to be; either in meditation on them, or in preaching of them, and by which they are always to abide, see [1Ti 4:15](#).

Exodus 25:16

Ver. 16. **And thou shall put into the ark the testimony that I shall give thee**. Which was the principal use of it: by the "testimony" is meant the law, written on two tables of stone; so called, because it was a testification of the mind and will of God, what he would have done or omitted; and as the Israelites had declared their approbation of it, and assent unto it, and had promised obedience to it, therefore, should they transgress it, it would be a testimony against them: now this was put into the ark, and preserved

there, see [De 10:1](#), which may signify that the law was in the heart of Christ, and which he undertook to fulfil, and with pleasure did it; that he is become the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness to them that believe in him; and that it remains with him as a rule of walk and conversation to his people, so far as it is of a moral, holy, and spiritual nature.

[Exodus 25:17](#)

Ver. 17. **And thou shall make a mercy seat of pure gold,**.... Or "covering" {n}; so Jarchi and Aben Ezra; for so the word properly signifies; and what is meant was no more than a cover of the ark, which was open at the top, and this was the lid of it, and exactly answered to it, as appears by the dimensions afterwards given of it; and because the root of this word in one form signifies to propitiate or make atonement, some render it the "propitiatory" or "propitiation" {o}; which is favoured by the apostle in [Heb 9:5](#) and to which he seems to refer, [Ro 3:25](#) and the rather since God is represented sitting on this, as showing himself propitious and well pleased with men, by his communing with them from hence; the Septuagint version takes in both senses, rendering it the "propitiatory covering" {p}: this being called by what name it will, was typical of Christ; he is the seat of mercy, or, as it is in the New Testament expressed, the throne of grace; whereon, or in whom God shows himself to be gracious and merciful to the children of men; all the stores of mercy are in him, and all the vessels of mercy are put into his hands; the mercy of God is displayed in the mission of him as a Saviour, and is glorified by him in a way consistent with his justice and holiness; through him only special mercy is communicated to sinful men, to whom God is only merciful in Christ: and Christ himself is all mercy to his people; his ways of old were mercy and truth, and all his works, especially his great work of redemption, are done in mercy and pity to them; he shows himself to be merciful to them, by sympathizing with them, and supporting them under all their temptations and afflictions, in granting them all the necessary supplies of grace here, and by bestowing eternal life on them hereafter: he is their "covering", the covering of their persons by his righteousness, imputed to them, and of their sins, by his blood shed for them, and sprinkled on them, and of the law, by his satisfaction for the transgressions of it; whereby they are secured from the avenging justice of God, and wrath to come: and he is the "propitiation" or "propitiatory", who has made atonement and reconciliation for sin; and in and through whom God shows himself propitious to his people, he being pacified, his wrath appeased, and his justice satisfied by his obedience and sufferings: and this mercy seat, being of "pure gold", without any alloy or mixture in it, may denote the purity of Christ's obedience, righteousness, and sacrifice, in the completeness of salvation by him, without any works of righteousness of men; the worth and excellency of Christ, and of these blessings of his, and the preciousness of

his blood, and the continued virtue and efficacy of it, and of his righteousness and sacrifice, by which the propitiation is made:

two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof: which are exactly the dimensions of the ark, to which this was a lid or cover, see [Ex 25:10](#) in the mystical sense it intimates, that Christ, in his nature, obedience, sufferings, and death, is the end of the law for righteousness, which is entirely commensurate, and answers to all its demands: his holy nature is answerable to the holiness and spirituality of the law; his righteousness to all that obedience it requires, and his sufferings and death to the penalty of it; so that, through Christ, we have a righteousness to justify us before God, as long and as broad as the law is, though the commandment is exceeding broad, [Ps 119:96](#). Aben Ezra observes, that there is no mention made of the thickness of the mercy seat; and the same Jarchi takes notice of, but adds, that, according to their Rabbins, it was an hand's breadth, and the Targum of Jonathan says,

"and its thickness an hand's breadth."

{n} trpk "opertorium", Montanus; "tegmen sive operimentum", Vatablus; "operculum", Piscator. {o} "Propitiatorium", V. L. Pagninus, Munster, Tigurine version. {p} ilastrion epiyema Sept. "operculum propitiatorium", Junius & Tremellius.

[Exodus 25:18](#)

Ver. 18. **And thou shalt make two cherubim of gold,**.... Which some take to be in the form of birds, and others of winged animals, such as the like were never seen, so Josephus; the Jews commonly suppose they were in the form of young men, which they observe the word signifies in the Chaldee language; others, that they were in the form of an ox, the face of an ox and a cherub being the same, [Eze 1:10](#) and indeed their form is best discerned from account of them in Ezekiel, and in the Revelation, and from the latter we best learn what they were; they were hieroglyphics or emblems, not of the two Testaments, as many of the ancients, nor of the angels, since they are distinguished from them, much less of the trinity of persons in the Godhead; but either of the saints and true believers in Christ in common, of both dispensations, legal and evangelical, and so signified by the number "two"; and being made of gold may denote their excellency, worth, and value in the esteem of Christ; for the precious sons of Sion are comparable to fine gold for their preciousness, solidity, and duration, as well as for their sincerity and simplicity; or rather of the ministers of the word in particular; and these may be signified by two, and at the prophets of the Old

Testament and the apostles of the New; and the ministers of the word in all ages, and particularly during the reign of antichrist, are called the two witnesses that prophesy in sackcloth; and being said to be of gold, may respect the grace of God bestowed on "them", comparable to gold, the gifts of the Spirit of God they are furnished with, as well as the precious truths of the Gospel committed to their trust:

of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat; not of gold melted and poured into a mould, and so received the form of the cherubim; nor were they first made by themselves, and then placed at the two ends of the mercy seat, and soldered to it; but they were made of the same mass of gold with the mercy seat, and beaten out of it with an hammer, and planished and smoothed, and so wrought up into this form, as appears by the following verse; and may denote the union of believers to Christ, who are one body and one spirit with him; and the union of the Old and New Testament churches in him, and who are but one church, one body, of which he is the head; and as he is the foundation of the apostles or prophets, on whom they are laid, he is the cornerstone in which they are united; and so it may likewise signify the nearness of the ministers of the word to Christ, their dependence on him, and their partaking of the same gifts and graces of his Spirit, only in measure, being made by him able ministers of the Gospel.

[Exodus 25:19](#)

Ver. 19. **And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end,**.... The situation of the cherubim is particularly explained, lest, as Jarchi observes, it should be thought that there were two at both ends of the mercy seat; whereas there were only one at one end, and another at the other, opposite to each other, and both pointing to the mercy seat; which may express the situation and office of the ministers of the word under each dispensation, who are so placed as to derive all their gifts and graces from Christ, and to point him out unto the sons of men as the only way of salvation, the only propitiation for sin, and through whom alone grace and mercy are to be had:

even of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubim on the two ends thereof; this is not so much intended the more to inculcate and confirm the situation of the cherubim, as more fully to explain the matter of which they were made; for it was "of" or out of the mercy seat that they were made, at the two ends of it; that is, they were made not only of the same kind of metal with that, but out of the same mass or lump of gold that was; a lid of gold being made commensurate to the ark, what remained above that measure, at the ends of it, were beaten and formed into two cherubim. Exodus 25:20 Ver. 20. **And the cherubim shall stretch forth their wings on high,**.... From

whence it appears they were in the form of winged creatures, as the seraphim in Isaiah's vision, and the living creatures in those of Ezekiel and John; and their wings did not hang down by them, or on the side of them, but were stretched out upwards towards the heaven above their heads; denoting the readiness, agility, and swiftness of the ministers of the word to do the work and will of Christ, as well as their expectation of all the supplies of gifts and grace from him to enable them to do it: covering the mercy seat with their wings; which reached each other; though, as Jarchi {q} says, between them and the mercy seat there was a hollow of ten hands' breadth; so high were they stretched upwards, though they met each other: and their faces shall look one to another; and which is expressive of the harmony, concord, and agreement of the true and faithful ministers of Christ one with another; who all agree in preaching Christ, and him crucified, and in the several momentous and important doctrines of the Gospel: towards the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubim be; as before observed, it may denote their directing souls to Christ as the only way of salvation, keeping always in all their ministrations this great truth in view, atonement and satisfaction by the blood and sacrifice of Christ, and salvation alone by him; which they make the rule of their ministry, and from which they never swerve, taking care not to deliver anything contrary to it, or which may serve to cast a veil over it. {q} T. Bab. Succah, fol. 5. 2. Vid. Gloss. in ib. Exodus 25:21 Ver. 21. And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark,.... Over it, as a covering for it: this situation of the mercy seat above the ark, where the law was, signifies, that there is no mercy but in a way of righteousness, or of satisfaction to the law of God, and in a consistence with the honour of it; and the cherubim over the mercy seat making a throne for the majesty of God, in which he sat, and the ark below a kind of footstool for him, shows that Christ, the mercy seat and propitiatory, stands between God and his law, and is the mediator between God, and men the transgressors of that law, and by fulfilling it has covered the sins of his people, which are violations of it; and being above it, and having magnified and made it honourable, is able to suppress its charges and accusations, and secure from its curse and condemnation: and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee; or "after thou shalt put in the ark", &c. {r}, as the particle "vau" is sometimes used; the sense is, that then the mercy seat should be put above, and upon the ark, as the covering of it, after the law, or the two tables of testimony, were put into it; for then it was covered, and not to be opened any more; see Ex 40:20. {r} Nrah law "postquam in area", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius. Vid. Nold. Concord Ebr. part. p. 290. Exodus 25:22 Ver. 22. And there I will meet with thee,.... With Moses, and so with the high priest in later times, when he should enter into the holy of holies, and with the people of God as represented by him, when he should go in and inquire for them of the Lord: and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim; converse with him and them about whatsoever they should apply unto him for, these being the symbols of the divine presence: hence the Lord is frequently described as "dwelling between the

cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony"; that is, which cherubim are upon it, being on the mercy seat, which was the cover of it; or rather "which is upon" {s}, which mercy seat is upon the ark of the testimony, as it properly was; and here the Lord promises to commune of all things which I shall give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel: what they shall do, respecting those things which by Moses, or the high priest, they should inquire the mind and will of God about: this may signify that the way to communion with God lies through Christ, the mercy seat and propitiation, through his blood and righteousness, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; and the encouragement to it is from him, our great high priest, and from his propitiatory sacrifice; and the enjoyment of it is through him; our fellowship is with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ; God speaks to us by him, and reveals himself in him. {s} le rva "quod est", Vatablus. Exodus 25:23 Ver. 23. Thou shalt also make a table of shittim wood,.... As the sanctuary or tabernacle was an house for God to dwell in, he would have the proper furniture of an house, as a table, candlestick, &c. This table was to be in the same place with the ark and mercy seat; they were set in the holy of holies, where there were nothing else; but this in the holy place, on the north side of it, Ex 26:35 its principal use was to set the shewbread on, as after mentioned, and was typical of Christ, and communion with him, both in this life, and that to come. There is the table of the Lord, to which his people are now admitted, where he sits down with them, and they with him, to have fellowship with him in the ministration of the word and ordinances, of which he is the sum and substance; and this is very desirable and delightful, and an instance of his condescending grace, So 1:12, and he will have a table in his kingdom hereafter, where his saints shall eat and drink with him, in which their chief happiness will consist, Lu 22:30 This table may be considered as typical of Christ himself, for he is both table and provisions and everything to his people; and of him in both his natures; in his human nature, it being made of shittim wood, incorruptible; for though Christ died in, that nature, yet he saw no corruption, he rose again and lives for evermore; in his divine nature, by the gold it was covered with: two cubits shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof; it was two Jewish square cubits in length, which are about six English square feet and above half, viz. ninety four inches, according to Bishop Cumberland {t}. It was neither so long nor so broad as the ark by half a cubit, but was of the same height with it, being about thirty two inches high and three quarters, according to the Jewish and Egyptian cubit, which was about twenty one inches and more and was a proper height for a table; and this measure, no doubt, takes in the thickness of the table, and the height of the seat, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra observe. {t} Ut supra. (Of Scripture Weights and Measures, ch. 2. p. 34, 36.) Exodus 25:24 Ver. 24. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold,.... Cover it with a plate of gold, so that the wood was not seen; which may denote either the excellency of Christ's human nature, being pure and spotless, and adorned with the grace of the Spirit of God without measure; or rather of his divine nature, which is the head of

Christ, and said to be as the most fine gold, for in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily:and make thereto a crown of gold round about; that is, on both sides and at both ends; for though it is called a crown, it was a square, and this was both to ornament the table, and to keep from falling off of it what was set upon it. Jarchi says, it was a sign of the crown of the kingdom, for a table signifies riches and greatness, as they say a king's table: and indeed this was the table of the King of kings, who has on his head many crowns, and one must be made upon his table. Exodus 25:25Ver. 25. And thou shalt make unto it a border of art hand's breadth round about,.... Jarchi says, their wise men are divided about this; some say it was above, round about the table; others say it was below, fixed from foot to foot at the four corners of the table, and the board of the table lay upon the border:and thou shalt make a golden crown to the border thereof round about; this was not the same spoke of in the former verse, but another; that was above, and upon the table, this below and under it; or rather that was, as it may be better expressed, a lip, rim, or border, that went round within the table {u}; and this crown, surrounded that on the edge of it.{u} So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 61. 2. Exodus 25:26Ver. 26. And thou shalt make for it four rings of gold,.... As the ark had, and for the same use as the rings of that were, though whether cast, as they were, is not said:and put the rings in the four corners that are on the four feet thereof; as there were four feet at the four corners of the table, to each foot a ring was fastened; the use of these follows. Exodus 25:27Ver. 27. Over against the border,.... Or "under" it, as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions. Jarchi says the rings were fixed to the feet over against the top of the border:shall the rings be for placing of the staves to bear the table; into these rings staves were to be put, to carry the table from place to place, when it was necessary, as while they were in the wilderness, and before the tabernacle had a fixed settled place for it; for wherever the tabernacle was carried, the ark and the table were also: where the church of Christ is, there he is, and there are the word and ordinances; and which are sometimes moved from place to place, as from the land of Judea into the Gentile world, from the eastern part of the world to the more northern; and that by the ministers of the word, who bear the name, and carry the Gospel of Christ into the several parts of the world, as this table was bore by the Levites, Nu 4:7. Exodus 25:28Ver. 28. And thou shall make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold,.... In like manner as the staves for the ark, and which were made of the same wood:that the table may be borne with them; when moved from one place to another; these staves did not remain in the rings, as the staves for the ark did; but, as Josephus says {w}, were taken out, because they otherwise would have been in the way of the priests, who came every week to it, to set the shewbread on; and these were put in only when they carried it from place to place, as appears from Nu 4:8. {w} Antiqu. 1. 3. c. 6. sect. 6. Exodus 25:29Ver. 29. And thou shall make the dishes thereof,.... On which the shewbread loaves were set. Jarchi says they were of the form of the bread, and that there were two sorts, one of gold, and one of iron; in the iron one the bread was baked, and when they took it out of the oven,

they put it into the golden one until the morrow of the sabbath, when they set it in order upon the table; and that form is called "Kaarah", which we render a dish:and the spoons thereof; or rather "cups"; these, Jarchi says, were censers, in which they put the frankincense; and there were two of them for the two handfuls of frankincense, which they put upon the two rows of shewbread, Le 24:7. Josephus {x} calls them vials, and says, that on the bread were put two golden vials full of frankincense:and the covers thereof, and the bowls thereof, to cover withal; the one to cover the bread, and the other to cover the frankincense; or all the above said vessels were to cover the table, and with them all it must be pretty well covered with vessels. The Jews give a different account of these two last, and of their use, which we render "covers" and "bowls": the first of these Jarchi says were like the half of hollow reeds divided to their length, made of gold; and three of them were laid in order on the top of every loaf, so that one loaf rested upon these reeds; and they separated between loaf and loaf, so that the air could come in between them, and they did not become mouldy; the latter, he says, were props like stakes of gold standing on the ground, and they were higher than the table, even as high as the rows of bread; and they were forked with live forks, one above another, and the tops (or ends) of the reeds, which were between each loaf, rested upon these forks, that so the weight of the upper loaves might not be too heavy for the lower ones, and break them. A like account of them Ben Melech gives, and observes, that some make the first word to signify the props, and the second the reeds; and so they are interpreted by Maimonides {y}; and, according to the Misnah {z}, the props were four, and the reeds twenty eight. According to the Septuagint version, these were vessels used in libations, or drink offerings; and the last clause is rendered in it, "with which thou shall pour out": wine or oil, and so in some other versions; but it will be difficult to find any use for such libations or drink offerings at this table. {x} Antiq. l. 3. c. 6. sect. 6. {y} Pirush in Misn. Menachot, c. 11. sect. 6. {z} Menachot, ib. Exodus 25:30Ver. 30. And thou shall set upon the table shewbread before me always. Which consisted of twelve cakes loaves, set in two rows upon the table, and stood there a whole week, and every sabbath were renewed; and when the old ones were took away, which were eaten by the priests, new ones were set, so that they were always before the Lord; and being continually before him, were called shewbread, or "bread of faces", being always before the face of God. This was a memorial of the goodness of God in daily providing bread for the people of Israel, and was presented to him as a thankful acknowledgment of it, and being the same they ate at their own tables; and this being eaten by the priests, was expressive of the communion between God and them, they being guests of his, and feeding on the same provisions. This shewbread may be considered either as typical of the church and people of God, who are all one bread, 1Co 10:17, these pure and unleavened cakes may denote their purity, simplicity, and sincerity, being without the leaven of malice and wickedness; the number twelve, the twelve tribes of Israel, the whole spiritual Israel of God; their being called shewbread, or bread of faces, the presentation of

themselves to the Lord in public worship, and their being ever under the eye and care of God; their being set on the table, their standing in Christ, and security by him, who is the foundation of the apostles and prophets; and being set in rows, their order and harmony; being renewed every sabbath, the constancy of their worship, and the succession of them in all ages; the frankincense put on each row, the acceptance of their persons and services through the incense of Christ's mediation; the border round about them, the power of Christ around them to keep them from falling: or else as typical of Christ himself, of his being the food of believers, the bread of life: the shewbread of fine flour may fitly signify Christ, the finest of the wheat, the corn of heaven, the bread that comes from thence; its quantity, twelve cakes, the sufficiency of food with him, bread enough and to spare for the whole Israel of God; its continuance, the permanency of Christ as the food believers have always to feed upon; the frankincense on it, the gratefulness of Christ to such, to whom his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed; and being set for priests, and only for them, may show that Christ is only food to such who are made priests to God: or this may be an emblem of the intercession of Christ, who is the Angel of God's presence, ever before him, and represents the whole Israel of God, for whom he intercedes; and his intercession is continual, he ever lives to make intercession for them, and that is always acceptable to God. The twelve loaves, Josephus {a} says, signify the year divided into so many months. {a} Antiqu. l. 3. c. 7. sect. 7. Exodus 25:31 Ver. 31. And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold,.... Another piece of household furniture, and an useful one, especially in a house where there are no windows, as there were none in the tabernacle, denoting the darkness of the legal dispensation, see 2Ki 4:10. This candlestick was set in the holy place, on the south side of it, opposite the shewbread table, Ex 26:35 and was typical of the church of God; so the candlesticks John had a vision of signify seven churches, Re 1:13, the general use of which is, to hold forth light put into it, for it has none of itself, but what is put there by Christ: and this is not the light of nature and reason, nor the law of Moses, but the Gospel of Christ; which where it is set, gives light and dispels darkness; is useful to walk and work by; does not always burn alike, and will shine the brightest in the end of the world: this light is put into the candlestick by Christ the fountain of all light, and from whom all light is communicated, particularly the Gospel; and being put there, lost sinners are looked up by it, strayed ones are brought back, hypocrites are detected, and saints are enlightened, comforted, and refreshed: and this candlestick being made of "pure gold", may denote the worth and value of the church of God, and the members of it, their splendour, glory, and purity they have from Christ, and their duration; and thus the seven churches of Asia are compared to seven golden candlesticks, Re 1:12, and under the form of a golden candlestick is the Gospel church set forth in Zec 4:2. Josephus {b} is of opinion the candlestick has some mystical meaning in it, it being of seventy parts, as he says, refers to the twelve signs of the Zodiac, through which the seven planets take their course, whom Milton {c}

follows: of beaten work shall the candlestick be made; not of gold melted, and poured into a mould, from whence it might take its form; but it was beaten with an hammer out of an entire mass of gold, and not the following parts made separately, and then joined: his shaft, and his branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, shall be of the same; not only of the same metal, but beaten out of the same mass and lump of gold; these are the several parts of the candlestick: the "shaft" is the trunk and body of the candlestick, which stood in the middle of it, and in which the several parts united; and may either be typical of Christ, who is principal and head of the church, and stands in the middle of it, and is the cement of the several parts of it, and is but one, the one head, Mediator and Saviour; or else the church universal, of which particular ones are parts: its "branches" may either signify the several members of churches, who are in Christ as branches, and hold forth the word of light; or else minister, of the Gospel, who have their commission and gifts from him, and are held by him as stars in his right hand; or else particular churches, which are branches of the church universal: its "bowls", which were to hold oil for the lamps, may denote men of capacity in the churches, full of the gifts and graces of the Spirit, able to teach others also: and the "knops" and "flowers" were for decoration, and may signify the graces of the Spirit, with which private members and believers are adorned; or the gifts of the Spirit with which the ministers of the word are furnished, and appear beautiful, publishing the glad tidings of salvation by Christ. {b} Antiq. 1. 3. c. 7. sect. 7. {c} Paradise Lost. B. 12. ver. 254, 255, 256. Exodus 25:32 Ver. 32. And six branches shall come out of the sides of it,.... Out of the trunk or shaft, being beaten out of it: three branches of the candlestick out of one side, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side; Jarchi takes what we render the "shaft" to be the lower part of the candlestick, from whence three feet went out below; and the "branch" or "cane", for it is in the singular number in the preceding verse, he takes to be the middle branch or trunk, that went up from the middle of the foot upwards, and upon it was the middle lamp, in the form of a censer, to pour oil into the midst of it; and the six branches went out from the sides of that, here and there drawn obliquely, and went up to the height of the candlestick, which is the middle branch or cane; and they went up from the midst of that middle cane, one above another, the lowermost long, and that above it shorter than that, and the uppermost shorter than that; for the height of the tops of them were equal to the height of the middle cane, that is, the seventh, from whence the six went out. Exodus 25:33 Ver. 33. Three bowls made like unto almonds, with a knop and a flower in one branch,.... There were three bowls or cups in the form of almond nuts to each branch, which were either to hold oil for the lamps, as before observed, or, as others think, to catch the snuff which fell from them; and there were a "knop", which, according to the signification of the word, was in the form of a pomegranate, and a flower, which the Targum of Jonathan renders a lily; and they are both in Scripture emblems of the saints endowed with the gifts and graces of the Spirit: and three bowls made like almonds in the other branch; on the other side of the candlestick, opposite to the

former:so in the six branches that come out of the candlestick; there were the same number of bowls, with a knop and a flower in the rest of the branches, as in those mentioned. Exodus 25:34Ver. 34. And in the candlestick shall be four bowls,.... That is, in the trunk or body of it; the branches had but three apiece, but this being larger had four: and these were also made like unto almonds, with their knops and their flowers; as the bowls on the branches had with them. Exodus 25:35Ver. 35. And there shall be a knop under two branches of the same,.... According to Jarchi, from the middle of the knop (which was like a pomegranate, or, as others, like an apple) two branches were drawn from the two sides of it, here and there; so they teach in the work of the tabernacle, the height of the candlestick was eighteen hands' breadth: this clause is repeated twice in this verse, signifying there should be a knop under each of the three branches on one side, and three on the other side: for it follows, according to the six branches that proceed out of the candlestick; out of the trunk of it, as in Ex 25:32. Exodus 25:36Ver. 36. Their knops and their branches shall be of the same,.... Of the same metal, gold, and of same mass:all of it shall be one beaten work of pure gold not made in parts, and then put and soldered together, but the whole candlestick in all its parts and branches were to be beaten out of one piece of gold. Exodus 25:37Ver. 37. And thou shall make the seven lamps thereof,.... Which were, six of them, on the top of the six branches that came out of the sides of the candlestick, and the seventh on the top of the shaft which ran up in the middle of it; which no doubt were made of gold as well as the rest, and may signify the many members of churches bearing the lamp of a profession: or the several gifts and graces of the Spirit, which are sometimes, because of the perfection of them, called the seven spirits of God, and are compared to seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, Re 4:5 or else the ministers of the Gospel, who are the lights of the world:and they shall light the lamps thereof; Aaron and his sons, the priests in successive generations:that they may give light over against it to the table of shewbread, which was opposite to it on the north side of the tabernacle, and so by the light of these lamps the priests could see to place the shewbread in its order; or the candlestick itself, the lamps being so placed as to give light to the whole body of it, that it might be seen in all its parts very distinctly; unless it can be thought that these lamps were separate from the candlestick, and set around the sides of the holy place, and gave light to it: and this may rather seem to be the case, since these lamps are spoken of after the whole of it is said to be one beaten work of pure gold; but then we have no account of the lamps of the candlestick, unless they are supposed to be included in the branches; wherefore the first sense seems best. Exodus 25:38Ver. 38 And the tongs thereof,.... Which, according to Jarchi, was a sort of forks with which they took the wicks out of the oil, and put them in the lamps; or, as some think, the snuffers, but they are distinguished from tongs, 1Ki 7:49 and the snuffdishes thereof shall be of pure gold; in which the tongs or snuffers were put, or into which the snuff itself was put that was snuffed off. Jarchi says they were a sort of small cups, in which they put the ashes of the lamp, morning by morning, when they

trimmed the lamps from the ashes of the wicks which burned in the night, and were extinct: so Ben Gersom and Lyra say they were vessels full of water where those were put which were snuffed off, that they might not make a smoke, which is not improbable. Exodus 25:39 Ver. 39. Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels. The common talent weighed sixty pounds, but the sacred talent was double, and weighed one hundred and twenty pounds, as says Jarchi, and so Ben Melech: a talent of gold amounted to 5067 pounds, three shillings and ten pence of our money, according to Bishop Cumberland {d}.(Assuming a troy weight of 12 ounces to a pound, and an ounce of gold worth \$400 U.S., than a talent would be worth about \$600,000. Editor.){d} Of Scripture Weights and Measures, p. 121.

Exodus 25:40 Ver. 40. And look that thou make them,.... Or see that they are made by workmen employed:after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount; from whence it appears, that as Moses was showed the model of the tabernacle, so also of the candlestick, and of all its appurtenances, and of every other vessel in it; and he is strictly charged to look carefully and diligently to it, that everything be done exactly according to the model he had a view of, in which everything was particularly described, and nothing was left to the will, humour, and fancy of men.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 26:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 26

In this chapter a description is given of the tabernacle itself, and first of its inward curtains, of their number, matter, length, and breadth, and the manner of coupling them together, [Ex 26:1](#), and then of the outward curtains of it, their number, matter, length, and breadth, and coupling, and how disposed of, [Ex 26:7](#), and next of the two coverings of the tabernacle, of rams' skins and badgers' skins, [Ex 22:14](#), the boards for the tabernacle are also described, with their tenons and sockets, [Ex 26:15](#) and the bars and rings for it, by which it was kept firm together, [Ex 26:26](#), an account is given of the vail between the holy and the most holy place, [Ex 26:31](#), and of the hanging for the door of the tabernacle, [Ex 26:36](#).

Ver. 1. **Moreover, thou shalt make the tabernacle,**.... Which he was ordered to make before, the pattern of which was shown him in the mount: this was an habitation for God to dwell in, as the word properly signifies, and into which the furniture before described was to be put; this tabernacle was a type both of the human nature of Christ, which is the true tabernacle which God pitched, and not man, the greater and more perfect one, [Heb 8:2](#) in which the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily, where the glory of God is seen, in whom he grants his gracious presence to his people, and accepts of them and their sacrifices of prayer and praise; and also of the church of God, [Ps 43:3](#). Here Jehovah dwells, grants his presence to his people, and comes and blesses them; here he is worshipped, and spiritual sacrifices are offered up to him with acceptance: the tabernacle of Moses was made

[with] ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet; the ground of these curtains was fine linen, twined or doubled: and the Jewish writers, as Maimonides, Ben Gersom, and others, say it was six times doubled, the word "Shesh", here used, signifying six; and this was interwoven with threads of yarn dyed blue, purple, and scarlet; according to Jarchi, the threads of which this tapestry was made were twenty four times doubled: he observes,

"there were four sorts in every thread, one thread of fine linen, and three of wool, and every thread was doubled six times; lo, the four sorts, when they were twined together, there were twenty four double to a thread;"

which if so, must make a stuff of a very great consistence and stiffness. This, as

applied to the human nature of Christ, the fine linen may denote the purity of it; the various colours the different graces of the Spirit, with which it is adorned; or else the wounds, bruises, bloodshed, sufferings and death he endured in it: as applied to the church, may signify the clothing of the saints with the righteousness of Christ, that fine linen clean and white, and their being washed in his precious blood, and beautified with the graces of his Spirit:

with cherubim of cunning work shall thou make them; that is, with figures like those of the cherubim on the mercy seat, so disposed by the curious art and contrivance of the weaver, as to appear on both sides of this tapestry; for this was not wrought by a needle, which only shows the figure on one side, but by weaving, as Jarchi observes; and who says, that there was one figure on one side, and another on another; as, for instance, a lion on one side, and an eagle on the other; or, which is more likely, the same figure was seen on both sides, as Maimonides affirms, who says {e}, the work called Chosheb (which is what is here spoken of) is that whose figures appear on both sides, before and behind: this in the mystical sense may point either to the ministration of angels to Christ in his human nature, and to his people the heirs of salvation; or else to the service of Gospel ministers, done for the honour and glory of Christ, and the good of his church and people: Josephus {f} thinks these curtains had a mystical meaning in them, and represent the nature of the elements, and so Philo {g}.

{e} Hilchot Cele Hamikdash, c. 8. sect. 15. {f} Antiqu. 1. 3. c. 7. sect. 7. {g} De Vita Mosis, l. 3. p. 667.

Exodus 26:2

Ver. 2. The length of one curtain shall be twenty eight cubits,.... Or fourteen yards:

and the breadth of one curtain four cubits; or two yards; according to the common notion of a cubit being half a yard; but if, as Dr. Cumberland says, the Jewish and Egyptian cubit was three inches longer, this will make a considerable difference in the length and breadth of those curtains, especially in the former:

and everyone of the curtains shall have one measure; be of equal length and breadth.

Exodus 26:3

Ver. 3. The five curtains shall be coupled together one to another,.... Five of the ten curtains were to be sewed together, and make as it were one curtain:

and other five curtains shall be coupled one to another: the other five were to be joined together in like manner, and so made two large pieces of tapestry of fourteen yards long and ten broad, according to the common account of a cubit, but were much longer and broader.

Exodus 26:4

Ver. 4. And thou shall make loops of blue upon the edge of the one curtain,.... The first large curtain, consisting of five sewed together, at the edge of that:

from the selvedge in the coupling; where it was to be coupled with the other great curtain; "loops" or "eyelet holes" {h}, were to be made: these were not wove with the curtains, for they were not to be upon all of them, only at the two outermost of the largest ones, and therefore were made afterwards, probably with the needle:

and likewise shall thou make in the uppermost edge of [another] curtain, in the coupling of the second; loops also were to be made on the outermost edge of another curtain belonging to the second great curtain, where it was to be coupled with the first.

{h} tall "ocellos", Vatablus.

Exodus 26:5

Ver. 5. Fifty loops shalt thou make in the one curtain,.... In the first great curtain, or in the outermost of the five that were sewed together:

and fifty loops shalt thou make in the edge of the curtain that is in the coupling of the second; as many also were to be made in the outermost of the second great curtain where it was to be coupled with the first:

that the loops may take hold one of another; or rather that they might answer to one another in both curtains; for the loops could not take hold of one another, only were made to meet together by the taches, hooks, or clasps put into them, next mentioned.

Exodus 26:6

Ver. 6. And thou shalt make fifty taches of gold,.... Which some render "buttons" {i},

others "hooks" {k} they seem to be "clasps"; the use of them follows:

and couple the curtains together with the taches; the two great curtains were made out of the ten, which had in them fifty

{i} yorq "fibulas", Tigurine version, Vatablus {k} "Uncinos", Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius; so the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan.

Exodus 26:7

Ver. 7. And thou shalt make curtains of goats' hair,.... Jarchi calls it the flower or down of goats, the softer and finer part of their hair, which was spun by women, as appears from [Ex 35:26](#), and was made up into a stuff somewhat like our camelot; these curtains were coarser than the former, and were made to be put over them, to preserve them from the weather, as it follows:

to be a covering upon the tabernacle: which, by the curtains of linen coupled together, became one tabernacle, as in the preceding verse: and these curtains were to be a tent or covering over them: they were somewhat like, being made of the same matter, with the coverings with which the ancient Arabs covered their tents, which were made of goats' hair, as were the tents of Kedar alluded to in [So 1:5](#), these curtains of goats' hair denote the outward appearance of Christ in human nature, who, attended with all human infirmities, excepting sin, was in the form of a servant, in great meanness and poverty, covered with reproach, and had in the greatest contempt, and especially at the time of his sufferings and death; though all rich and glorious within, full of grace, and of all the blessings of grace, of righteousness and life, of light, joy, peace, and comfort for his people; and may also denote the mean appearance of the church and people of God outwardly; being, generally speaking, a poor and an afflicted people, subject to the scorn, reproach, and persecutions of men, but all glorious within, enriched with the grace of God and righteousness of Christ; and so, in one respect, like these curtains of goats' hair, and, in another respect, like the curtains of fine linen:

eleven curtains shalt thou make; one more than the other; the reason of which was, that there might be one at the entrance of the tabernacle, there being no linen curtain there, see [Ex 26:9](#).

Exodus 26:8

Ver. 8. The length of one curtain shall be thirty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain

four cubits,.... The breadth of them is the same with the linen curtains, but the length of them two cubits more; the reason of which was, that they might hang down lower on either side, and the better preserve them from any injury:

and the eleven curtains shall be all of one measure; as to length and breadth.

Exodus 26:9

Ver. 9. And thou shall couple five curtains by themselves,.... And make one large curtain of them, as was ordered with respect to the linen curtains:

and six curtains by themselves; as there were eleven of them, such a division was made of five into one large curtain, and six into another; and as that which had six in it would reach further than the other, provision is made for the disposal and use of that as follows:

and shall double the sixth curtain in the forefront of the tabernacle; at the entrance of it, in the east end of it; the sixth curtain reaching to that, and hanging down, was turned up, and so doubled, opposite the door or entrance; and was, as Jarchi says, like a modest bride that covers her face with a veil, which before this had no covering; for thus it was, as Dr. Lightfoot {m} describes it, the holy place was ten yards long, and the five curtains sewed together were just so broad, and so they covered only the top and the sides, but hung not down at the end, which was eastward--but the six (goat hair curtains) that lay east reached to the end, covered the pillars whereon that veil hung, and they hung half a curtain's breadth or a yard over the entrance.

{m} Works, vol. 1. p. 718.

Exodus 26:10

Ver. 10. And thou shalt make fifty loops on the edge of the one curtain, that is outmost in the coupling,.... Just in like manner, and in the same place where they were ordered to be put on the linen curtains, only these are not said to be of blue, but perhaps were wrought with goats hair: and fifty loops in the edge of the curtain which coupleth the second; these loops were set on each of the curtains where the two large pieces were to be coupled together.

Exodus 26:11

Ver. 11. **And thou shalt make fifty taches of brass**,.... As these curtains were coarser, and also the loops, so the taches, hooks, or clasps, were made of meaner metal, but answered the purpose of joining and coupling together full as well: and put the taches into the loops; one end of the hook or clasp into the loop on one of the curtains, and the other end of the hook or clasp into the loop on the other curtain answering to it: and couple the tent together, that it may be one; that the tent or covering over the tabernacle might be one, as the tabernacle by the like means was, [Ex 26:6](#).

Exodus 26:12

Ver. 12. **And the remnant that remaineth of the curtains of the tent**,.... Of the goat hair curtains, which were one more than the linen curtains:

the half curtain that remaineth; for the other half extended to the east end of it, at the entrance of the tabernacle, and hung down and was doubled there, and the other that remained is here disposed of:

shall hang over the backside of the tabernacle; the west end of it, where was the holy of holies; or rather, as Dr. Lightfoot {n} describes it, thus, it was when those curtains (of goats' hair) were laid upon the other over the tabernacle; they were not laid as these brazen loops (clasps it should be) did light just upon the golden ones over the vail, but three quarters of a yard more westward, so that the five curtains that went west did reach to the ground and half a curtain to spare, [Ex 26:12](#) the other six that lay east reached to the end, covered the pillars whereon that vail hung, and they hung half a curtain's breadth or a yard over the entrance.

{n} Works, vol. 1. p. 719.

Exodus 26:13

Ver. 13. **And a cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other side o that which remaineth in the length of the curtains of the tent**,.... The curtains of the tent, or the goat hair curtains, were two cubits longer than the other, and these are the two cubits, one on one side and the other on the other, which remained, and by which they were longer than the linen curtains:

it shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle; the north and south sides: on this side,

and on that side, to cover it; and as the above learned doctor observes {o}, their length of fifteen yards reached half a yard lower on either side than the other curtains did, and yet they came not to the ground by a quarter of a yard; so that the silver foundations (of which afterwards) were always plain to be seen everywhere but at the west end.

{o} Works, vol. 1. p. 719.

Exodus 26:14

Ver. 14. **And thou shalt make a covering for the tent of rams' skins dyed red**,.... This was a covering that was put over the curtains of goats' skin; but whether it went all over them, or only upon the roof of the tabernacle they covered, to keep out the rains from soaking through, is not certain, nor very evident; Jarchi thinks the roof was only covered with this covering of rams' skins; but others think it more reasonable that the whole was covered with them to preserve from dust and rain:

and a covering above of badgers' skins; of these skins

See Gill on "Ex 25:5", this was a fourth covering of the tabernacle; the first was of linen curtains, the second of goats' hair, the third of rams' skins, and the fourth of badgers' skins, which seems to have been thicker and courser, since shoes were made of them, [Eze 16:10](#), R. Judah, as quoted by Jarchi, thinks the two last were but one covering, half of it consisting of rams' skins and half of it of badgers' skins; but the text is express that the latter was a covering above and over the former: these several coverings of the tabernacle show the care that God takes of his church and people, and how sufficiently they are provided for, that they may be in safety from all their enemies, being clothed with Christ's righteousness, and under the purple covering of his blood, and surrounded by his almighty power, see [Isa 4:5](#).

Exodus 26:15

Ver. 15. **And thou shalt make the boards for the tabernacle**,.... Which were the pillars and supports, and properly the walls of it, which gave it its firmness and security, or otherwise the curtains would have been blown about by every wind: they were to be made

of shittim wood standing up; just as they grew, as a Jewish writer observes {p}; these planks or boards were not to be laid along the lengthways of them, but to be set upright; and may denote such who are pillars in the house of God, and are to be

upright both in heart and conversation, both ministers and private members; and indeed the church itself is the pillar and ground of truth, [Ga 2:9](#).

{p} Bartenora in Misn. Succa, c. 3. sect. 14.

[Exodus 26:16](#)

Ver. 16. **Ten cubits shall be the length of a board**,.... Or five yards, according to the common cubit:

and a cubit and a half shall be the breadth of one board; or three quarters of a yard; and from hence we may learn what were the height and the length of the tabernacle; according to the common computation of a cubit, it was but five yards high and fifteen long, since there were but twenty boards on each side, [Ex 26:18](#), but if three inches are added to each cubit, it will make its measures considerably larger: Josephus {q} says the boards were four fingers thick: according to Bishop Cumberland the boards of the tabernacle, containing fifteen Jewish square cubits, were very near fifty English square feet in their length and breadth.

{q} Antiqu. 1. 3. c. 6. sect. 3.

[Exodus 26:17](#)

Ver. 17. **Two tenons shall there be on one board**,.... Every board was to be so cut and shaped at the lower end of it, as to have, as it were, "two hands" {r}, as in the original, to enter into, lay hold on, and fasten in mortises:

set in order one against another; at a proper distance from each other, as the rounds of a ladder:

thus shalt thou make for all the boards of the tabernacle; everyone was to have two tenons.

{r} twdy ytv "duae manus", Montanus.

[Exodus 26:18](#)

Ver. 18. **And thou shalt make the boards for the tabernacle**,.... As in the manner before

described, so in number as follows:

twenty boards on the south side southward; which being a cubit and a half broad, made the length of the tabernacle fifteen yards according to the common account; but if these were cubits of twenty one inches, then its length was much greater.

Exodus 26:19

Ver. 19. **And thou shall make forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards,**.... Or bases {s}, and which were properly the foundation of the tabernacle, on which it was settled and established; these sockets were the mortises for the two tenons of each board or plank to be placed in, and were as broad as the plank, and, joining each other, made one entire basis for the whole structure; each socket contained a talent of silver, and was made of the silver given at the numbering of the people, [Ex 38:25](#), and a talent of silver, according to Bishop Cumberland, amounted to three hundred and fifty three pounds, eleven shillings and some odd pence of our money: by which may be judged the whole value of this silver foundation, which, with the four sockets of the vail, consisted of one hundred of them, which answer to the one hundred talents of silver collected at the above offering:

two sockets under one board for his two tenons, and two sockets under another board for his two tenons; and so in all the twenty boards, which took up the whole forty on the south side. {s} ynda "bases", V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Piscator, Drusius. Exodus 26:20 Ver. 20. And for the second side of the tabernacle the north side,.... The direction of the tabernacle was east and west; at the east end was the entrance into the holy place, and at the west end the holy of holies; and the two sides were north and south; and as on the south side, so on the north[there shall be] twenty boards: just the same number as the laws of building required. Exodus 26:21 Ver. 21. And their forty sockets of silver,.... answerable to the twenty boards, for their two tenons to be placed in as in mortises: two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board; and so under all the boards on the north side as on the south. Exodus 26:22 Ver. 22. And for the sides of the tabernacle,.... Or the ends of it, the east and west, and the account begins with the west:westward thou shalt make six boards; so that the breadth of the tabernacle was but nine cubits, or four yards and a half, according to a common cubit; but two boards more placed at the two corners of the sides, next observed, added to the breadth of it. Exodus 26:23 Ver. 23. And two boards shalt thou make for the corners of the tabernacle in the two sides. For the northwest and southwest corners, in the north and south sides; concerning which Dr. Lightfoot thus writes {t}: and the west end had six planks entire, besides a plank at either corner, joining end and sides together; these corner planks were of the same breadth

that all the others were, and, thus set, the middle of the breadth of the one plank was laid close to the end of the south side, or to that plank that was furthest west; so that a quarter of a yard of the breadth of the corner plank was inward, to make up the tabernacle breadth, a quarter was taken up with the thickness of the side plank to which it joined, and a quarter lay outward: thus at the southwest, just so was it at the northwest corner: then count; the two corner planks were inward a quarter of a yard apiece, and the six planks that stood between them of three quarters apiece, behold five yards, just the breadth of the house between wall and wall: these corners knit end and side together, and were the strength of the building; as, adds he, "Christ is of his church, making Jews and Gentiles one spiritual temple." {t} Ut supra. (Works, vol 1. p. 719.) Exodus 26:24 Ver. 24. And they shall be coupled together beneath,.... At the bottom of the boards or planks: and they shall be coupled together above the head of it unto one ring at the top of the boards there was a ring, to which they were coupled and fastened, and so at the bottom of them, though not expressed: some understand this of all the planks, both at the two sides and at the west end; but it seems rather to respect only the corner planks, since it follows: thus shall it be for them both, they shall be for the two corners; which were coupled and joined alike at each corner as if they were twins, as the word used signifies; or the meaning is, that these were double boards, and so like twins, which were so closely put together that they seemed but one board; which was done that the corners might be thicker and stronger, and so for the greater firmness of the building. Exodus 26:25 Ver. 25. And they shall be eight boards,.... Six at the west end and one at each corner, northwest and southwest: and their sockets of silver, sixteen sockets the same as those for the boards on both sides north and south: they were of the same metal, silver; and they were two under one board, to receive its two tenons as follows: two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board; and so under all eight, and which sockets joining with those of the two sides, and in all made ninety six, were the basis and foundation of the tabernacle, and was a figure of Christ, the only foundation of his church and people; and the several tenons of the boards joined into those sockets of silver may denote the union of the members of Christ and ministers of his word to him, and their dependence on him. Exodus 26:26 Ver. 26. And thou shalt make bars of shittim wood, &c.] Which being put into rings or staples of gold, kept the boards tight, close, and firm together: five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle: for instance, the south side; four of these were placed, two at the upper end of the boards, and two at the lower end, and the fifth in the middle, particularly taken notice of, Ex 26:28, how long these bars were it is not said, but it is reasonable to conclude that they reached the length of the tabernacle, which was thirty cubits; and as it was not easy to get bars of such a length, the notion of Josephus {u} perhaps, may be right, that each two consisted of divers parts which joined one another, the head of one entering into the hollow of the other and as he supposes they were five cubits long, a row of them must have six parts, which went along the sides, north and south, and the west end two, which was but ten

cubits. {u} Ut supra. (Antiqu. 1. 3. c. 6. sect. 3.) Exodus 26:27Ver. 27. And five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle,.... Suppose the north, these bars were disposed of in the same manner as those on the south side:and five bars for the boards of that side of the tabernacle; or the end of it, the west end, as follows:for the two sides westward; that is, the two corners at the west end, the southwest and the northwest corners; and these five bars reached from the one to the other, two at the upper part of the boards, and two at the lower part, and one in the middle. Exodus 26:28Ver. 28. And the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end. From east to west, as Jarchi interprets it; but this can only be said of the middle bar on the north and south sides of the tabernacle, for the middle bar at the west end was north to south: about this bar there is some difficulty, as that it is said to be "from end to end", as if that only was; whereas it is reasonable to suppose that the rest were so likewise; it may be, they might come somewhat short of reaching the end, whereas this did entirely; or rather the truer reason is, because the rest of the bars consisted of various parts; whereas this was a long bar of one entire piece, reaching from one end of the tabernacle to the other: likewise it is said to be "in the midst of the boards"; and the Jewish writers are generally of opinion, that it did not run along in rings as the other bars did, but the boards and planks being bored, this went through the thickness of the wood throughout; and in this they are followed by Arias Moatanus, Vatablus, Dr. Lightfoot, and others: but to this it may be objected, that the boards must be very thick indeed, even incredibly so, to admit of such a bore as to let in a bar of this kind, and is not so consistent with its being a portable house; and besides, when it was at any time taken down, in order to be removed, such a bar must give a great deal of trouble, and be in danger of being broke to pieces; besides, if it was thus covered in the boards, as it must be, what need was there that it should be overlaid with gold, as in the next verse? it is more probable, therefore, that it went not through the midst of the thickness of the wood, but in the middle of the length of the planks, and so expresses its different situation from the rest of the bars, which were at or towards the top and bottom of the planks, and this in the middle of them. It is not said of these bars, whether they were within or on the outside of the tabernacle; it is most likely they were on the outside, as Josephus {w} says they were; since they would not have made a good appearance within side, where they would have been always seen by the priests within, whereas being without they were covered with the curtains. {w} Ut supra. (Antiqu. 1. 3. c. 6. sect. 3.) Exodus 26:29Ver. 29. And thou shalt overlay the boards with gold,.... Not merely gild them, but cover them with thin plates of gold; and which, because it would take up a great quantity of gold, and make the boards very heavy, unless the plates were very thin, when they were taken down and carried from place to place, some have thought they were only gilded:and make their rings of gold, [for] places for the bars; these were made of solid gold, and were as staples to let the bars into: and, according to Jarchi, there were two rings to every board:and thou shalt overlay the bars with gold: cover them with plates of gold; and these bars and

staples of gold show how compact and firm the church of God is, through his almighty power, as well as how glorious and splendid it is by his grace. Exodus 26:30 Ver. 30. And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle,.... When thus finished, and all the furniture belonging to it completed: according to the fashion thereof, which was showed thee in the mount; this is the third time that this is observed to Moses in the account of the tabernacle; which shows how punctually God would have the pattern observed he had given him, and that all things might be particularly and exactly done according to it, see Heb 8:5. Exodus 26:31 Ver. 31. And thou shalt make a vail,.... The use of this, as follows, was to divide the holy place from the most holy place in the tabernacle; it has its name from hardness, it being very stiff and strong, for it was made of thread six times doubled, and was four fingers thick, as the Jewish writers say: this vail may represent the sin of man, which separates between God and man, was removed by the death of Christ when the vail was rent, and so the way to heaven opened; or the obscurity of the legal dispensation, the Gospel being veiled under the shadows of the law, and the way into the holiest of all then not so manifest, and particularly the ceremonial law, which separated between Jew and Gentile, and is now abolished by the death of Christ; or rather it was typical of the human nature of Christ, his flesh, called in allusion to it the vail of his flesh, Heb 10:20. This vail was made of blue, and purple, and scarlet, of fine twined linen of cunning work; it seems to have been made of the same materials, and in the same curious manner of workmanship with the curtains of the tabernacle, Ex 26:1, and was itself no other than a curtain, and so it is interpreted by some Jewish writers {x}. It being made of "fine linen" denotes the purity of Christ, of his nature, life, and righteousness; of "twined linen", his strength, courage and steadiness; "of blue, purple, and scarlet", the several graces of the Spirit, with which his human nature was adorned, his flaming zeal for his Father's glory and the good of his people, his bloody wounds, sufferings, and death, the preciousness of his blood, the dignity of his person, and his glorious exaltation, purple and scarlet being the colours wore by kings: with cherubim shall it be made; signifying either the ministration of angels to him in his incarnate state, or the mission of Gospel ministers by him, see Ps 139:15. {x} Vid. R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 37. 2. Exodus 26:32 Ver. 32. And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim wood, overlaid with gold,.... For it was ten cubits long, and as many broad; and being of such a stiffness and thickness as it was, required so many pillars to support it: these pillars may signify the deity of Christ, which is the support of his human nature, and in which it has its personal subsistence, and gives all its actions and sufferings virtue and efficacy; and being of "shittim wood", which is incorruptible, may denote his eternity, and being covered with gold, his glory: their hooks shall be of gold; which were upon the tops of the pillars on which the vail was hung: and the pillars were upon the four sockets of silver; which were properly the pedestals or feet of the pillars; and these sockets, into which the pillars were let and placed, and the hooks the vail hung by, may hint to the union of the two natures in Christ, who is God and man in one person,

God manifest in the flesh; see So 5:15. Exodus 26:33 Ver. 33. And thou shall hang up the vail under the taches,.... Or clasps, which coupled the two grand curtains, or pieces of tapestry, each consisting of five curtains, of which the tabernacle was made, Ex 26:6, and by this it seems that the place where they met, and were clasped, was where the vail was hung between the holy and the most holy place: for, as Dr. Lightfoot {y} observes, according to the division of the house was the division of the curtains, the vail that parted the holy from the most holy was hung just under the golden clasps that knit the five curtains together; so that five curtains lay over the holy place, and the other five over the most holy; but with this difference, the holy place was ten yards long, and the five curtains sewed together were just so broad, and so they covered only the top and sides, but hung not down at the end which was eastward; but the most holy was but five yards long, and the five curtains over that did not only cover the top, but also hung down at the west end to the silver bases; and of what he says of the goat hair curtains, and their brazen clasps or taches, and where they met, and what they covered, See Gill on "Ex 26:12", that thou mayest bring in thither within the vail the ark of the testimony; the ark in which the testimony or law of God, testifying his will, was put; of which see Ex 25:10, &c. this was to be set in the most holy place, as being holy, spiritual, just, and good; and as being fulfilled by Christ, signified by the ark in which it was, through whose righteousness alone there is admission into the holy of holies, by which this law is fulfilled, magnified, and made honourable: and the vail shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy; which was so thick, that there was no seeing through it; and none might enter by it into the holiest of all but the high priest, and he only on the day of atonement; and into the holy place might none come but the priests, to do the service of the sanctuary. The holy place was typical of the church on earth, where all the saints, who are priests to God, worship, and the most holy of heaven, the perfect state of bliss and happiness. {y} Works, vol. 1. p. 718. Exodus 26:34 Ver. 34. And thou shalt put the mercy seat upon ark of the testimony,.... With the cherubim of glory overshadowing it; all which were a representation of the way of man's salvation flowing from the mercy and grace of God, through the propitiation by Christ, and his perfect righteousness, by which the law is fulfilled; and all this is published in the Gospel by the ministers of it, signified by the cherubim: and these are all the things that were "in the most holy place"; and they were placed at the west end of it. Exodus 26:35 Ver. 35. And thou shalt set the table without the vail,.... The table of shewbread, of which see Ex 25:23, this was not to be within the vail, but without it, in the holy place: and the candlestick opposite the table, of which see Ex 25:31, &c. signifying, that in the church of God, in the present state of things, which the holy place was an emblem of, there are both food and light: the candlestick was placed on the side of the tabernacle, toward the south; according to Jarchi, two cubits and a half from the side of it: and thou shalt put the table on the north side; of the tabernacle, directly opposite the candlestick, two cubits and a half from the south side, as the same writer says; Exodus 26:36 Ver. 36. And thou shalt

make an hanging for the door of the tent,.... At the east end of the tabernacle, which lay open and exposed, and for which as yet there was no provision; the west end of it, where stood the holy of holies, was enclosed with six boards, and two corner ones, Ex 26:22 and the linen curtains hung down there to the silver bases, and so did the curtains of goats' hair, even to the ground, and half a curtain to spare, see Ex 26:12 but for the east end, or entrance into the tabernacle, there was nothing till now ordered, only the sixth curtain of the goats' hair curtains was there turned up double, Ex 26:9, but now here an "hanging" is ordered, or rather a "covering" {z}, as the word signifies; Jarchi calls it a vail; and this was instead of a door to the tabernacle, and divided the holy place, into which only the priests might enter, from the place where the people stood and worshipped: and this also was made of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen; as was the vail between the holy and the holy of holies; only with this difference, this was wrought with needle work, and that was of "cunning work": the difference between these two, "Rokem" and "Chosheb", was, as Ben Melech from the Misnah relates, that "Rokem" is the work of a needle, and therefore but one face or figure is seen, that is, it is only seen on one side; but "Chosheb" is the work of a weaver, and therefore two faces or figures are seen, that is, they are seen on both sides; and with this account Maimonides agrees, See Gill on "Ex 26:1", besides this hanging, Josephus {a} tells us there was another of linen, of the same size with this, and which covered it, and preserved it from the weather, and which on festival days was turned back, that the people might have a prospect of the other; just as there were curtains of goats' hair to preserve the linen ones. {z} Kom "operimentum", Montanus; "tegumentum", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; "velum", Tigurine version, Drusius. {a} Antiqu. 1. 3. c. 6. sect. 4. Exodus 26:37 Ver. 37. And thou shalt make for the hanging five pillars of shittim wood,.... One at each corner of the entrance into the tabernacle, and the other three at a proper distance from each other, so as to make four ways for the priests to enter in at; as there might very well be, since there was a breadth of ten cubits, or five yards or more: and overlay them with gold; with plates of gold, for a gild would soon wear off by continual use in passing and repassing. This is to be understood not of the whole pillars, but of the chapters, heads, tops, or knobs of them, and of their fillets or girdles; in some parts of them the wood appearing, as is plain from Ex 36:38: and their hooks shall be of gold; on which the hanging, covering, or vail was hung: and thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for them; for the pillars to stand upon them, and were of a meaner metal than those on which the pillars for the vail before mentioned; that being the entrance into the holy of holies, where the divine Majesty dwelt, this into the holy place where the priests did their service.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 27:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 27

This chapter treats of the altar of burnt offering, and of all things relative to it, [Ex 27:1](#), of the court of the tabernacle, its hangings on each side, with pillars, sockets, and hooks for them,

[Ex 27:9](#) and it is concluded with an order to the Israelites to bring oil olive for the lamp of the sanctuary, [Ex 27:20](#).

Ver. 1. **And thou shall make an altar of shittim wood**,.... This is a different altar from that made of earth before the tabernacle was built, [Ex 20:24](#) and from the altar of incense, [Ex 30:1](#) this was to offer burnt offerings on, and was placed at the door of the tabernacle, in the court of the people, where they brought their sacrifices to the priests to offer for them: it stood in the open air, as it was proper it should, that the smoke or the sacrifices might ascend up and scatter. This altar was not typical of the altar of the heart; though indeed all the saints are priests, and every sacrifice of theirs should come from the heart, and particularly love, which is more than all burnt offerings; but the heart is not this altar of brass to bear the fire of divine wrath, which none can endure; nor does it sanctify the gift, it being itself impure: nor of the Lord's table, or the table on which the Lord's supper is set; that is a table, and not an altar, a feast, and not a sacrifice; is not greater than the gift, nor does it sanctify: nor of the cross or Christ, on which he died, bore the sins of his people, and sanctified them by his blood; but of Christ himself, who by his office as a priest, his human nature is the sacrifice, and his divine nature the altar; and he is that altar believers in him have a right to eat of, [Heb 13:10](#) his divine nature is greater than the human, is the support of it, which sanctifies and gives it virtue as a sacrifice, and which makes the sacrifices of all his people acceptable to God. This altar of burnt offering is said to be made of "shittim wood", a wood incorruptible and durable; Christ, as God, is from everlasting to everlasting; as man, though he once died, he now lives for evermore, and never did or will see corruption; his priesthood is an unchangeable priesthood, and passes not from one to another, and particularly his sacrifice is of a continual virtue and efficacy:

five cubits long, and five cubits broad: the altar shall be square: as to the length and breadth of it, which were alike, two yards and a half each, according to the common notion of a cubit. The altars of the Heathens were made in imitation of this, they were square as this was. Pausanias makes mention of an altar of Diana, that was tetragwov "square", sensibly rising up on high. And this figure may denote the perfection of

Christ's sacrifice, and the permanency of it; though the altars in Solomon's temple, and in the visions of Ezekiel, are much larger, and which also were square, [2Ch 4:1](#). Christ's sacrifice is large and extensive, making satisfaction for all his people, and for all their sins; and he is an altar large enough for all their sacrifices to be offered up to God with acceptance:

and the height thereof shall be three cubits; a proper height for a man to minister at; for as Aben Ezra observes, the height of a man is but four cubits ordinarily; so that a man serving at the altar would be a cubit, or half a yard more above it, and would have command of doing on it what he had to do.

[Exodus 27:2](#)

Ver. 2 **And thou shalt make the horns of it upon the four corners thereof**,.... Which were either for ornament, or for keeping what was laid upon the altar from falling off, or for the fastening of the sacrifice to them, and were what criminals fled to for refuge, and laid hold on; and may denote the power of Christ, who is the horn of salvation to preserve his people from a final falling away, and from ruin and destruction, and his protection of those that fly to him for refuge; and these horns being at the corners of the altar may respect the four parts of the world, from whence souls come to Christ for everlasting salvation:

his horns shall be of the same; that is, made of the same wood as the altar itself and so may lead to observe the like things: or "upwards out of it" {b}, the altar; prominent from it, as the Arabic version, and so the sacrifices could be bound to them, [Ps 118:27](#):

and thou shalt overlay it with brass; with plates of brass, that it may endure the fire, and preserve the wood from being burnt with it; this may denote not only the brightness, lustre, and glory of Christ, like the shining brass, but his great strength in bearing the sins of his people, and all the punishment due unto them, even the fire of divine wrath, without being consumed by it. Jarchi observes, that it was overlaid with brass, because it was to make atonement for the impudence of the forehead, which is as brass, [Isa 48:4](#).

{b} wnm "sursum exeo", Noldius, p. 615.

[Exodus 27:3](#)

Ver. 3. **And thou shall make his pans to receive his ashes**,.... Not to receive them in as they fell, but to gather them up in, and carry them away; and this was done every morning about cockcrowing, not much sooner nor later {c}:

and his shovels; to throw up the ashes together to be put into the pans; Jarchi describes this vessel to be like the cover of a brass pot, with a handle to it; the same we call a fire shovel:

and his basins: to receive the blood of the sacrifice, and out of which it was sprinkled, as the word signifies, and may be rendered sprinkling basins:

and his flesh hooks; not such as were used to take flesh out of the pot, [1Sa 2:13](#) for there could be no use for such at the altar of burnt offering; but were, as Jarchi says, like hooks recurved, with which they struck into the flesh, and turned it upon the coals to hasten the burning of it; and with which very probably they kept the fire and the parts of the sacrifices in good order, until they were consumed:

and his fire pans; which were a kind of censers in which coals of fire were taken off from the altar of burnt offering, and carried to the altar of incense, as Jarchi and Ben Gersom observe, see [Le 16:12](#) but as censers did not belong to the altar of burnt offering, but to the altar of incense, Fortunatus Scacchus {d} is of opinion, that these were a larger sort of vessels, wherein the fire which came down from heaven was kept burning while the altar and grate were cleansed from the coals and ashes, and when the altar was had from place to place:

all the vessels thereof thou shalt make of brass; as being fittest for the use of this altar.

{c} Misn. Yoma, c. 1. sect. 8. & Maimon, in ib. {d} Sacr. Elaeochrism. Myrothec. l. 2. c. 73. p. 676, 677.

[Exodus 27:4](#)

Ver. 4. **And thou shalt, make for it a grate of network of brass**,.... Or "sieve", as in [Am 9:9](#), it was a plate of brass with holes in it, to let through either the blood that drained from the parts of the sacrifice, or the ashes of it; for this was the focus or hearth, on which the sacrifice and the wood were laid and burnt: this, according to the Targum of Jonathan on [Ex 38:4](#) was to receive the coals and bones which fell from the altar: and so may denote the purity of Christ's sacrifice, which was offered up without spot to God, and the use of him as the altar to sanctify our gifts, and take away the sins of our holy things:

and upon the net shalt thou make four brazen rings in the four corners thereof; by which, with chains put into them, the grate was fastened to the four horns of the altar, and the use of them was to let it down and hang in the middle of the altar, and to take it up when there was occasion for it; though some think these rings were not "in" the grate, but "by" it, as the particle may be rendered, a little lower than that, on the sides of the altar; into which the staves after mentioned were put, and with which the altar was carried when removed from place to place.

Exodus 27:5

Ver. 5. And thou shalt put it under the compass of the altar beneath,.... That is, the grate was to be put within the square compass of the altar, in the hollow part of it, for the wood and sacrifice to be laid upon it:

that the net may be even to the midst of the altar; and as the altar was three cubits high, this net or grate was let down by chains to its rings a cubit and a half, and being of such a depth was capable of containing a great deal.

Exodus 27:6

Ver. 6. And thou shalt make staves for the altar, staves of shittim wood,.... Like those that were made for the ark, and for the same purpose:

and overlay them with brass; with plates of brass, whereas those for the ark were overlaid with gold.

Exodus 27:7

Ver. 7. And the staves shall be put into the rings,.... Not into the rings of the grate, as Jarchi and others: though Dr. Lightfoot {f} thinks these came out of each corner through the altar frame, and hung out of the frame, and in these the staves being put, made the frame and the grate sure together, and so they were also carried together; but it seems rather, that as the grate had rings peculiar to that, to let it down and take it up, and with which it was carried, with a purple cloth covered over it, [Nu 4:13](#) so the altar had rings peculiar to that on the sides of it, into which these staves were put:

and the staves shall be upon the two sides of the altar, to bear it; and which shows that

the rings into which these were put were not the rings of the grate, for they were at the four corners of it, which hung upon the four horns of it; whereas the staves were on the two sides of it, in order to bear it from place to place, which was done by the Levites; and was typical of the ministers of the Gospel bearing the name of Christ, and spreading the doctrine of his sacrifice and satisfaction, in the world, which is the main and fundamental doctrine of the Gospel.

{f} Works, vol. 1. p. 722.

[Exodus 27:8](#)

Ver. 8. **Hollow with boards shalt thou make it**,.... The frame of it being made of boards of shittim wood, there was nothing within side but the grate, which was put within the square, down into the middle of it, and so was light of carriage; though the Targum of Jonathan, and other Jewish writers, represent this hollow as filled up with dust and earth, to answer to the altar of earth Moses was before bid to make; but this seems quite contrary to the present direction: the hollowness of the altar may denote the emptiness of Christ when he became a sacrifice: he emptied himself, as it were, when he became incarnate, of all his greatness, glory, and riches, and became mean and poor for the sake of his people, that they through his poverty might be made rich, [Php 2:7](#)

as it was showed thee in the mount, so shall they make it; or, "as he showed thee" {g}, that is, God. Moses had a model of this altar showed him, and he was to be careful to instruct the workmen, and see to it, that they built it exactly according to the model.

{g} harh "fecit videre", Pagninus, Montanus; "ostendit Dominus", Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius; so Ainsworth.

[Exodus 27:9](#)

Ver. 9. **And thou shall make the court of the tabernacle: for the south side southward**,.... This was a large court yard to the house of God, or tabernacle, which stood in it at the upper end of it; it was enclosed, but open to the air; and in it, between the entrance into it and the holy place, stood the altar of burnt offering before described, and on one side of that the laver for the priests to wash in; into this the people of Israel were admitted, and where they brought their sacrifices and worshipped: it was typical of the visible church of God on earth, which, though an enclosure, and is separated from the world, yet consists of professors, good and bad,

of real saints and hypocrites; as into this court Israelites of every character, sex, and state entered. In David's time it was divided into various courts, and what answered to it when the temple was built were the several apartments called the courts of the priests, where they sacrificed, and the court of Israel, where the men Israelites worshipped, and the court of the women, where they were by themselves; and in later times there was another court separate from these, called the court of the Gentiles, into which they might enter; and the description of this court begins with that side of it which lay full south: there shall be

hangings for the court of fine twined linen of one hundred cubits long for one side; for the south side; and these hangings, with the rest all around, made the court, and were the walls of it; and from hence we learn, that it was one hundred cubits or fifty yards long, according to the common computation of a cubit; though it was three hundred inches more, this cubit being three inches more than is commonly supposed. These hangings, vails, or curtains, for so in the versions they are differently called, were the enclosure of the court; they were made of fine linen, six times twisted, but not of various colours, and curiously wrought with cunning work, as the curtains of the tabernacle were; and according to the signification of the word, they were wrought full of holes, like eyelet holes, or in the manner of network; so that though they kept persons from entering in, they might be seen through, and through them might be seen what was doing in the court: and all this may signify that the visible church of God on earth is separated from the world, and should consist of men called out of it, and of such who are clothed with that fine linen, clean and white, the righteousness of the saints, and which is the righteousness of Christ, and who have both inward and outward holiness; and though none but those who are admitted members of it may partake of its ordinances, yet others may be spectators of what is done in it.

[Exodus 27:10](#)

Ver. 10. **And the twenty pillars thereof and their twenty sockets [shall be of brass],...** On these pillars the hangings, rails, or curtains were set, and they were for one side, the south side, in number twenty; and so must stand five cubits, or two yards and a half or more, distant from each other, since the length of the hangings were one hundred cubits: these, according to Philo the Jew {h}, were made of cedar, but if of wood, most probably of "shittim wood", as they are by most thought to be; though one would think, according to the plain and express words of the text, they as well as their sockets were of brass: and Josephus {i} expressly says they were of brass, and which seems fittest for the purpose: now though the church of God itself is a pillar, and so is every true member of it, **[1Ti 3:15](#)** yet ministers of the Gospel may be more especially designed, **[Pr 9:1](#)** who are the principal support of the churches of God, and of the

interest of religion; and are set for the defence of the Gospel, and are steadfast in the ministration of it:

the hooks of the pillars and their fillets shall be of silver; the hooks on the pillars might be somewhat like our tenter hooks, and so Jarchi describes them, as having one end crooked upwards, and the other end fixed in the pillar; and as for the fillets, he says, they were silver threads round about the pillars; but whether they were upon the face or of them all, or on the top, or in the middle of them, he confesses his ignorance; only this he knew, that the word has the signification of girding or binding; and these fillets might not only be for ornament, but for the binding of the hangings to the pillars: and so Ben Gersom says, that they were silver threads, with which the curtains were bound to the pillars, that the wind might not separate them from them; and both the silver hooks and fillets may signify the word and ordinances as administered by the preachers of the Gospel, in which there is an union, conjunction, and communion between them and the churches.

{h} De Vita Mosis, l. 3. p. 667. {i} Antiqu. l. 3. c. 6. sect. 2.

Exodus 27:11

Ver. 11. **And likewise for the north side in length there shall be hangings of one hundred cubits long**,.... The north and south sides of this court being equal, the same length of hangings were for the one as the other;

and his twenty pillars, and their twenty sockets of brass; there went on this side the same number of pillars and sockets, and of the same metal:

the hooks of the pillars and their fillets of silver; just as they were on the south side.

Exodus 27:12

Ver. 12. **And for the breadth of the court, on the west side**,.... On the west end, the upper end of the court, near to which reached the holy of holies:

shall be hangings of fifty cubits: or twenty five yards and more, so that the court was but half as broad as it was long:

their pillars ten, and their sockets ten; which was a number proportionate to the hangings, and stood at an equal distance from each other, as the pillars for the sides, at

five cubits, or two yards and a half, as commonly computed.

[Exodus 27:13](#)

Ver. 13. **And the breadth of the court on the east side eastward,**.... Which was the entrance into it:

shall be fifty cubits; the east end and west end were of the same measure.

[Exodus 27:14](#)

Ver. 14. **The hangings of one side of the gate,**.... Or entrance into the court:

shall be fifteen cubits; or seven yards and a half:

their pillars three, and their sockets three; and so stood at the same distance from one another as the rest of the pillars did, the distance of five cubits.

[Exodus 27:15](#)

Ver. 15. **And on the other side [shall be] hangings fifteen cubits,**.... On the other side of the gate, or entrance into the court, on the northeast side, as the other may be supposed to be the southeast side, there was the same length of hangings:

their pillars three, and their sockets three; the same as on the other side of the gate.

[Exodus 27:16](#)

Ver. 16. **And for the gate of the court shall be an hanging of twenty cubits,**.... Which, with the fifteen on each side, make the fifty cubits, the breadth of the court eastward, [Ex 27:13](#), this hanging was better than the rest, much finer and richer;

for it was of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needle work: and was of the same as the hangings for the door of the holy place, [Ex 26:36](#) this was a figure of Christ, and of the graces of the Spirit in him, and of his bloodshed, sufferings, and death; who is the door into the church, and to the ordinances of it, and leads on to the holy place, and even to the holy of holies, see

Joh 10:9

their pillars shall be four, and their sockets four: so that the pillars of this court at both sides and each end were sixty, twenty on each side, south and north, and ten at each end, west and east.

Exodus 27:17

Ver. 17. All the pillars round about the court shall be filleted with silver,.... This is observed, because only mention is made before of the pillars that were on the south and north sides of the court, as filleted with silver; but inasmuch as those at both ends, east and west, were to be so likewise, this is added:

their hooks [shall be of] silver, and their sockets of brass; no notice having been taken of the hooks to the pillars at both ends, though they were as necessary there as elsewhere, and must be supposed, and though the sockets are mentioned, yet not their metal, and therefore are in general included here.

Exodus 27:18

Ver. 18. The length of the court shall be one hundred cubits,.... And as may be concluded from the length of the hangings on each side:

and the breadth fifty everywhere; at both ends, and was the breadth of the hangings there, and which all around made the court:

and the height five cubits; or two yards and a half, and somewhat more; it was but half the height of the tabernacle, and hence that might be seen above it every way; so that, according to Bishop Cumberland, it contained one rood, twenty one perches, and twenty seven square feet, and was half an Egyptian aoura, which is the square of one hundred Jewish or Egyptian cubits: "of fine twined linen"; of which the hangings were made, and here called the court, as they properly were, for they made it:

and their sockets of brass; the bases on which all the pillars stood, upon which the hangings of fine twined linen were, were of brass; which seems to be repeated, that the foundation of this court might be observed to be different from that of the tabernacle; the foundation of that, or the sockets, into which the boards of it were put, being of silver. Exodus 27:19 Ver. 19. All the vessels of the tabernacle in all the service thereof,.... Which either refers to the vessels belonging to the altar of burnt

offering, and so is a repetition of what is said, Ex 27:3 or rather to instruments that were used at the setting up and taking down of the tabernacle; such as hammers and the like, to drive the staves into the rings, and knock out the pillars from their sockets, &c., as Jarchi and Ben Gersom observe; for otherwise the vessels used in the sanctuary were of gold or silver, or covered therewith, and not of brass, as these are afterwards said to be:and all the pins thereof; what these were is not easy to say; for there was nothing made of brass in the holy or most holy place, but the taches or clasps, with which the curtains of goats' hair were coupled together, and the sockets on which the five pillars were set at the entrance of the door of the tabernacle, Ex 26:11 and it is possible that those pillars might be fastened in their sockets with brass pins; for the clasps or taches can hardly be called pins:and all the pins of the court shall be of brass; these were brass pins, or stakes fastened in the ground all round the court, to which cords were tied, and these fastened to the hangings; whereby they were kept tight and close, that the wind could not move them to and fro, as Jarchi and Ben Melech observe, and so Josephus {k}; see Isa 33:20. {k} Antiqu. l. 3. c. 6. sect. 2. Exodus 27:20Ver. 20. And thou shall command the children of Israel,... Here begins a new section of the law; an account being given of the tabernacle, and its parts, and the furniture thereof, next the several parts of service done in it are observed; and the account begins with that of the candlestick in the holy place, in order to which Moses is directed to command the people of Israel, whose business it was to provide for it:that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light; for the light of the candlestick, to light up the several lamps in the several branches of it; and the oil to be brought and used there was not any sort of oil, as what is got out of fishes, as train oil, or out of nuts, as oil of almonds, but what comes from the olive tree; and this must be pure and free from lees and dregs, and must be beaten with a pestle in a mortar, and not ground in a mill, that so it might be quite clear; for being bruised and beaten, only the pulp or flesh of the olive was broken, but being ground in a mill, the stones were broken and ground, and so the oil not so pure.Jarchi and Ben Melech, from their Rabbins, observe, that after the first drop was pressed out, they put them into mills and grind them; but then, though the oil was fit for offerings, it was not fit for the light of the candlestick. Ben Gersom says, they put the olives bruised into a basket, and the oil dropped from them without pressing at all; and this was the choicest and most excellent for the light. The quantity to be brought is not fixed; but the measure fixed by the wise men of Israel, as Jarchi says, was half a log, that is, for every lamp; and this was the measure for the longest nights, the nights of the month Tebet, and so the same for all other nights:to cause the lamp to burn always night and day, continually, as it was proper it should, that the house of God might not be at any time in darkness; as it would otherwise be, since there were no windows in it; and his servants minister in it in the dark, even in the daytime, at the altar of incense, and at the shewbread table, which is not reasonable to suppose; and though there are some passages of Scripture which seem to intimate as though the lamps only burnt till the morning, and

then went out, and were lighted every evening; this difficulty may be solved, and the matter reconciled by what Josephus {l} relates, who must be an eyewitness of it, that three of the lamps burned before the Lord in the daytime, and the rest were lighted at the evening; and Hecataeus {m}, an Heathen writer, speaking of the golden candlestick, says, its light was unextinguished day and night, particularly the lamp which was in the middle; also the candlestick is by the ancient Jews, and by Nachmanides, said to have been never extinct. {l} Antiqu. 1. 3. c. 8. sect. 3. {m} Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. 1. 9. c. 4. p. 408. Exodus 27:21 Ver. 21. In the tabernacle of the congregation,.... The reasons usually given for this name of the tabernacle are, either because the children of Israel gathered and met together here at certain times, or because here the Lord met with Moses, and his successors, as he had promised, Ex 25:22, but neither of them will hold good; not the first, because the place where the candlestick was, and which Aaron and his sons are here said to order, was in the holy place, into which only the priests entered, and therefore could not be called the tabernacle of the congregation, from the people of Israel being gathered and assembling there; not the latter, because it was in the most holy place, where the Lord promised to meet with Moses, and commune with him, even from between the cherubim over the mercy seat there: indeed, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation the children of Israel assembled, and there the Lord met them, and so the whole might be called from thence, and there seems to be no other reason for it, Ex 29:42 and this place was without the vail, which is before the testimony; that is, without the vail which divided between the holy and the most holy place, and which vail was before the ark, where the law or the testimony was put; for the candlestick was in that part of the tabernacle which was without the vail, or in the holy place: and here Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the Lord; that is, they were to take care that the lamps which went out might be lighted; and that they be kept clear and burning, they were to trim and snuff them, for which they had proper instruments provided for them, Ex 25:37. This points at the word of God, which shines as a light in a dark place, and is a lamp to the feet, and a light to the path, and to the constant application of Gospel ministers in preaching it, in order to enlighten men in all ages unto the end of the world: it shall be a statute for ever unto their generations, on the behalf of the children of Israel; on whom it was incumbent to provide oil for the lamps, as long as the tabernacle and temple service lasted; and figured out either the maintenance of Gospel ministers by the churches, or the grace and gifts of the Spirit, with which they are furnished by the head of the church, often signified by oil in Scripture.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 28:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 28

This chapter informs us of the servants God would have to minister to him in the house, or tabernacle, he had ordered to be made, even Aaron and his sons, [Ex 28:1](#) of the garments they were to wear in their service, [Ex 28:2](#) and first of the garments of the high priest, and particularly of the ephod, with the girdle, on the shoulder pieces of which were to be two onyx stones, with the names of the children of Israel engraved on them, [Ex 28:6](#), and that of the breastplate of judgment, with the Urim and Thummim in it, [Ex 28:15](#) and of the robe of the ephod, [Ex 28:31](#), and of the mitre, [Ex 28:36](#) and then of the garments of the common priests, [Ex 28:40](#).

Ver. 1. **And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him,**.... Moses is bid to fetch or send for Aaron and his sons to him: or "cause" them to "draw near" {n} to him, and stand before him, that he might in the name of the Lord, and by his authority, distinguish and separate them

from among the children of Israel: and before them all invest them with the office of priesthood, as it follows:

that they may minister unto me in the priest's office, before this time every master of a family was a priest, and might and did offer sacrifice, and all the Israelites were a kingdom of priests; and Moses, as Aben Ezra calls him, was "a priest of priests"; but now it being enough for him to be the political ruler of the people, and the prophet of the Lord, the priestly office is bestowed on Aaron and his sons; nor might any afterwards officiate in it but such as were of his family; and a great honour this was that was conferred on him, and to which he was called of God, as in [Heb 5:4](#) and it is greatly in the favour of Moses, and which shows him to be an upright and undesigning man, that sought not to aggrandize himself and his family; that though he had so much honour and power himself, he sought not to entail any upon his posterity. It is hinted in the latter part of the preceding chapter, that Aaron and his sons should minister in the sanctuary, and look after the candlestick, and its lamps; and here the design of God concerning them is more fully opened, which was, that they should be his peculiar ministers and servants in his house, to do all the business appertaining to it:

even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons: who were all the sons that Aaron had that we read of; though Aben Ezra thinks it probable that he

might have other sons, and therefore the names of those are particularly mentioned, who were to be taken into the priest's office with him; the two first of these died very quickly after this, in a very awful manner, as the sacred story relates; and from the other two sprung all the priests that were in all successive generations.

{n} brqh "appropinquare fac", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus.

Exodus 28:2

Ver. 2. **And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother**,.... Called so, because in these he was to minister in the holy place, and perform holy service; and because typical of the holy human nature of Christ our great High Priest, and of his spotless righteousness, and of the garments of sanctification, both outward and inward, that all believers in him, who are made priests unto God, are arrayed with: Aaron and his sons being appointed priests, their garments are first described before their work and even before their consecration to their office; and there were some peculiar to Aaron, or the high priest, and different from those of his sons, or the common priests; and which are first treated of, as the breastplate, the robe of ephod, and the plate of gold; besides these, there were four more, common to all the priests, as the coat, the breeches, the girdle, and bonnet. Now whereas some of the Heathen priests performed their office, and offered their sacrifices, naked, which was very shameful and abominable, as Braunius {o} from various authors has shown, though this was not done by them all: in opposition to such a filthy practice, and to show his detestation of it, the Lord orders his priests to be clothed, and that in a very splendid manner, with garments

for glory and beauty; that is, with glorious and beautiful ones, and which would make his priests look so: and this was done, partly to point out the dignity of their office to themselves, that they might take care to behave suitable to it, and keep up the honour and credit of it; and partly to make them respectable unto men, and be honoured by them, none being clothed as they were, as Aben Ezra observes; but chiefly because they were typical of the glory and beauty of Christ's human nature, which was as a garment put on, and put off, and on again, and in which he officiated as a priest, and still does; and which is now very glorious, and in which he is fairer than any of the children of men; and of the garments of salvation, and robe of righteousness, in which all his people, his priests, appear exceeding glorious and beautiful, even in a perfection of beauty.

{o} De Vestitu Sacerdot. Heb. 1. 1. c. 1. sect. 5. p. 11.

Exodus 28:3

Ver. 3. **And thou shall speak unto all that are wise hearted**,.... That have knowledge and understanding in mechanic arts, particularly in making garments; and it required men of more than ordinary skill to be employed in making these, because they were uncommon ones, and required a good deal of thought and judgment, and care and application, to make them exactly as they should be:

whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom; for besides a common understanding of things, these required a peculiar gift from God, which some men, as Bezaleel and Aholiab had:

that they may make Aaron's garments, to consecrate him to put upon him at the time of his consecration; and indeed this was one way, by which, as well as by sacrifices, that he was consecrated, see [Ex 29:1](#),

that he may minister unto me in the priest's office for the priests, without having these garments on, might not minister in their office; for when these garments were off, as they were when they were out of their service, they were as other men, as laymen, See Gill on "Eze 42:14".

Exodus 28:4

Ver. 4. **And these are the garments which they shall make**,.... Some for Aaron and some for his sons, some peculiar to the high priest, and others in common to him and other priests:

a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre, and a girdle; of each of which, with others, there is a more particular account in this chapter, and will be observed in their order:

and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons: as those before mentioned, with some others not mentioned; some for Aaron only, and others that were to be worn by his sons also:

that he may minister unto me in the priest's office; these were absolutely necessary to the execution of the priestly office, and an essential qualification for it, and without which it was not lawful to serve in it.

[Exodus 28:5](#)

Ver. 5. **And they shall take**,.... The Targum of Jonathan adds, out of their substance; that is, those that were wise hearted, and had knowledge and skill in making such garments; these were to take, not out of their own personal substance, but they were to take or receive from Moses what the people freely offered for such service, [Ex 36:3](#),

gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen; pieces of gold, which they beat into thin plates, and drew into wires, and which they worked into stuffs, woollen or linen, or both, of the colours here mentioned; all which were made use of in the ephod, girdle, breastplate, &c. see [Ex 39:3](#) and had a mystical significance in them.

[Exodus 28:6](#)

Ver. 6. **And they shall make the ephod**,.... This was the outermost garment of, all, and was put over the robe; it was a short garment, reaching to the loins, as Kimchi {p}; or to the buttocks, as Abarbinel {q}; and not to the heels or feet, as Jarchi {r}, and Maimonides {s}; for Josephus {t} says it was but a cubit long, which was little more than half a yard; he means that part of it which was distinct from the shoulder pieces, and came down from thence: the hinder part of it covered the back, and reached to the middle of the buttocks; and the forepart covered the breast and belly, and with shoulder pieces under the arm holes was buttoned with onyx stones upon the top of the shoulders, and was girt about the breast with a curious girdle: it had no sleeves, though Josephus {u} says it had, as appears from the make of it; it was different from the linen ephod worn by the common priests and others, and was a symbol of the human nature of Christ, our great High Priest: it was made of

gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work; the stuff of which it was made was interwoven with threads of gold, and threads of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn, and threads of linen, wrought with divers figures in a curious manner, which looked very beautiful; and was a fit emblem of the glory, excellency, and purity of Christ's human nature; of the various graces of the Spirit in it; of his heavenly original; of his blood, sufferings, and death, and glorious exaltation; and of its being a curious piece of workmanship wrought by the Lord himself, [Heb 10:5](#).

{p} Comment. in 1 Chron. 15. 27. {q} Comment. in loc. {r} Comment. in loc. {s} Hilchot Cele Hamikdash, c. 9. sect. 9. {t} Antiqu. 1. 3. c. 7. sect. 5. {u} Ib.

Exodus 28:7

Ver. 7. **It shall have the two shoulder pieces thereof**,.... Which were two pieces that joined to the ephod, reaching from the arm holes to the shoulders both on the right and left, coming from before and behind; and meeting on the shoulders, were buttoned with two onyx stones, and covering the shoulders are called by this name:

joined at the two edges thereof; the two edges of the ephod; not sewed thereunto with a needle, as Maimonides {w} and other Jewish writers think, but were woven along with it, and in the weaving was of the same with it:

and so it shall be joined together; that is, the hinder and fore parts of the ephod in the shoulder pieces of it, shall be joined together by the two onyx stones upon them, hereafter mentioned, with which they were buttoned.

{w} Ut supra. (Hilchot Cele Hamikdash, c. 9. sect. 9.)

Exodus 28:8

Ver. 8. **And the curious girdle of the ephod, which is upon it**,.... Which was worn along with it, and went out from it like two thongs, as Jarchi says, which girt the ephod close to the back and breast:

shall be of the same; of the same matter as the ephod, and woven in the same manner, and together with it:

according to the work thereof; wrought with the same coloured, curious, and cunning work:

even of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen; and from the gold in it, it was called a golden girdle, to distinguish it from others, and with it the priest was girt under the arm holes about the paps, to which the allusion is, [Re 1:13](#) and is an emblem of the close union of the human nature of Christ to his divine which is the effect of his love to his people; which, as it is seen in his incarnation, so more especially in his sufferings and death; and it may denote his strength to do his work as a priest, his readiness to perform it, and his faithfulness and integrity in it; righteousness being the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

Exodus 28:9

Ver. 9. **And thou shall take two onyx stones**,.... called from the colour of a man's nail, which they to resemble: the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan call them stones of beryl, and so the Syriac version; the Septuagint, stones of emerald, and the Arabic version, crystal stones: but, according to Josephus {x}, they were sardonyx stones, and in which Brannius {y} thinks he was right:

and grave on them the names of the children of Israel; the names of the twelve sons of Jacob, six on one stone and six on the other, as often mentioned, for which onyx stones are very fit; and they must be very large to have so many letters graved upon them; for there is no reason to believe the initial letters of their names only were engraved, but their whole names at length. In the Museum at Dresden is an oriental onyx which cost 48,000 dollars; it is of an oval figure, and its longest diameter is almost six inches, and in such an one might easily be engraved so many names: and Wagenseil makes mention of one in the possession of the bishop of Bamberg, in which were represented Christ sitting, and teaching his twelve apostles standing round him, of which he has given the figure {z}: the onyx stone being of the colour observed, was a fit emblem of Christ in his human nature, and if the sardonyx, of him in both his natures; and as the twelve tribes of Israel were a figure of the church, their names being on two stones may denote both the Jewish and Gentile churches; these being precious stones on which they were engraven, may signify how valuable the church and its members are to Christ; and being alike there, their being equally loved of God, chosen in Christ, redeemed by his blood, interested in all the blessings of his grace, and shall enjoy the same glory; and their names being there, the distinct knowledge had of them by name, and being in ouches of gold, their dignity and safety, as afterwards declared.

{x} Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 3. c. 7. sect. 5.) {y} De Vestitu Sacerd. Heb. l. 2. c. 18. sect. 4. p. 730. {z} Not. in Misn. Sotah, c. 9. p. 996.

Exodus 28:10

Ver. 10. **Six of their names on one stone**,.... The names of the six eldest on the stone upon the right shoulder:

and the other six names of the rest on the other stone: the names of the six youngest on the stone upon the left shoulder; for these stones, as afterwards said, were put on the shoulders of the priests,

according to their birth; the order of it; so that upon the first stone were engraven the

names of Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, and Naphtali; and on the second stone the names of Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin; and so they are disposed by Jarchi, with whom Josephus agrees {a}; though some Jewish writers, and particularly Maimonides {b}, place them otherwise; but this seems most agreeable to the letter and sense of the text.

{a} Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 3. c. 7. sect. 5.) {b} Hilchot Cele Hamikdash, ut supra. (c. 9. sect. 9.)

Exodus 28:11

Ver. 11. **With the work of an engraver in stone**,.... Not in common but precious stones: Moses was not to do this himself, as it could not be supposed he should, but he was to employ an engraver, whose business it was, and one that was capable of doing it in a professional manner:

[like] the engravings of a signet shall thou engrave the two stones with the names of the children of Israel: as in signets or seals, by which impressions are made on wax, the letters or figures are cut deep, that they might on the wax stand out; so it seems the letters of the names of the children of Israel were cut in these stones: this shows that engraving on precious stones is very old, and the ancients indeed are said to excel in this art:

thou shalt make them to be set in ouches of gold; in bezils or sockets, such as precious stones in rings are set in; these with the stones in them served as buttons to fasten together the hinder and fore part of the ephod on the shoulder pieces of it.

Exodus 28:12

Ver. 12. **And thou shall put the stones upon the shoulders of the ephod**,.... That is, the shoulder pieces of it; these stones were put there, the names of the twelve sons of Israel being engraven on them, and they, set in rims or sockets of gold, and serving for buttons to the shoulder pieces: but chiefly the design of them was

for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel: not to put the Israelites in mind of the merits of their ancestors, as the Targum of Jonathan; for none of their works were meritorious, and some were not good, and not worthy of remembrance; but rather to put Aaron or the high priest in mind to pray and make intercession for the twelve tribes, whose names were on the stones; or rather to put God himself in remembrance

of his promises made unto them, and that they were his dear, special, and peculiar people; just as the rainbow was to be a memorial to the Lord of the covenant he made with all flesh, and which is to be understood after the manner of men:

and Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial; signifying his presentation of them to the Lord when he appeared before him on the mercy seat; his intercession for them, and his patient bearing all their infirmities and weaknesses; in which he was a type of Christ, who presents all his people to his divine Father, makes intercession for them, and bears all their burdens, the care and government of them being upon his shoulders, [Isa 9:6](#).

[Exodus 28:13](#)

Ver. 13. **And thou shalt make ouches of gold.** Or sockets of gold, to put the two onyx stones in, [Ex 28:11](#) for of other ouches we read not, excepting the enclosings, in which the twelve stones of the breastplate were set, [Ex 28:20](#) and these are again mentioned because of the chains to be fastened to them, of which in the following verse.

[Exodus 28:14](#)

Ver. 14. **And two chains of pure gold at the ends,**.... The use of which was to hang the breast plate on, after described; one end of them was fastened to rings on the ouches in the shoulder pieces, and the other end to rings on the breastplate, and thus it hung:

of wreathen work shall thou make them; these chains were not made after the manner of circles or ringlets coupled together, as chains usually are, but of golden wires twisted together as a rope is twisted

and fasten the wreathen chains to the ouches; to the ouches on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, in which the onyx stones were set, very probably to rings that were in these ouches.

[Exodus 28:15](#)

Ver. 15. **And thou shall make the breastplate of judgment,**.... Called a "breastplate", because worn upon the breast of the high priest; and a breastplate "of judgment", because it was to put him in mind that he should do justice and judgment in the

execution of his office, and that he should have at heart the judgment of the people of Israel; and in difficult cases should ask it of God, and faithfully declare it to them: it was, with the twelve stones in it, an emblem of the church and people of God, borne upon the heart of Christ our great High Priest, who are made righteous by him, yea, the righteousness of God in him, and are called by his name, the Lord our righteousness; the judgment or government of whom is committed to him, and which he exercises, by appointing laws and ordinances for them, by constituting and qualifying persons to act under him, to explain those laws, and see them put in execution, by vindicating and protecting them, and by the open justification of them at the last day:

with cunning work, after the work of the ephod thou shall make it; wrought with divers figures in a very curious manner:

of gold, of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine twined linen, shalt thou make it; a piece of stuff interwoven with threads of gold, or golden wires, and with threads of yarn, of blue, purple, and scarlet colours, and with threads of fine twined linen six times doubled; all which may signify the beautiful array of the saints, with the several graces of the Spirit; and especially their being clothed with fine linen, called the righteousness of the saints; that raiment of needlework, and clothing of wrought gold, the righteousness of Christ, consisting of his obedience, sufferings, and death, fitly expressed by these various colours.

[Exodus 28:16](#)

Ver. 16. Four square it shall be, [being] doubled,.... That is, when it was doubled; for the length of it, according to Maimonides {c}, was a cubit, which is two spans, and so, when it was doubled, was but one, and its length and breadth being alike, as follows:

a span [shall be] the length thereof, and a span [shall be] the breadth thereof; a square, which is the measure, the form of the new Jerusalem, the church of Christ, [Re 21:16](#) and may denote the perfection, firmness, and immovableness of it, [Ps 125:1](#). Some have thought that this breastplate was doubled, in order to have something enclosed in it: some imagine, that within this fold were put the Urim and Thummim, which they suppose to be two words engraved on a stone, and different from the twelve stones in it; others, that the name of Jehovah was written and put there, as the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi on [Ex 28:30](#) and other Jewish writers, and others, fancy some little images were put within these folds, the name with the teraphim, and supposed to be the Urim and Thummim; but if these were hid in the folds, they could not be seen when consulted; it is most probable there is nothing put within the double, which was

not done for any such use; but most likely that it might be strong to bear the weight of the precious stones, put in ouches of gold upon it.

{c} Cele Hamikdash, c. 9. sect. 6.

Exodus 28:17

Ver. 17. **And thou shalt set in it settings of stones,**.... Or "fill in it fillings of stones" {d}; which shows that there were in it ouches, or sockets of gold, the hollows of which were to be filled up with precious stones: even four rows of stones; making a four square, and so filling up the measure of the breastplate: the first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle; about these stones, and those that follow, there is a great variety of interpretations of them, both among Jews and Christians; and they seem to be little known: our translators upon the whole seem to be as right as any in giving the names of them; the first of these, the "sardius", is a red stone of a blood colour, as the "cornelian" or "ruby", and which some have thought is here meant, and has its name either from the place where it has been found, Sardis or Sardinia; or rather from its red colour; for "sered" signifies red in Eze 28:13 as Braunius {e} has observed from Kimchi; and so Odem, which is the word here used, signifies, and undoubtedly intends a stone of such a colour; and it is highly probable that this is the Demium of Pliny {f}, which is one of the three kinds of sardius in India; and the red is so called from its redness, as the same Braunius observes. The second stone, the "topaz", had its name, according to Pliny {g}, from an island in Arabia, in the Red sea, called Topazos; and the best topaz is the topaz of Cush or Arabia, as in Job 28:19. The topaz of the ancients was of a green colour; and so the three Targums call this stone Jarken or Jarketha, which signifies green; hence some have taken this to be the emerald, which is of a fine green colour: the third stone is the "carbuncle", as we render it; whatever stone is meant, it must be a bright and glittering one, like lightning, as the word signifies; wherefore some have taken it to be the emerald, so the Septuagint and Braunius {h}; it being a very radiant and glittering stone, of a grass green, and very refreshing to the sight; but Danaeus {i} says, that the carbuncle is that species of the ruby, which of all is most beautiful and excellent, and darts out light like lightning to those that look at it at a distance, and shines in the middle of the night and darkness, so that it enlightens places near it, as if it were a sun: [this shall be] the first row; now upon these three stones were engraven the names of Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, as both the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem agree. {d} Nba talm wb talmw "et implebis in eo plenitudinem lapidis", Montanus; "vel eum impletione lapidis", Pagninus; "implebis in eo impletione lapidis", Drusius. {e} De Vestitu Sacerd. Heb. 1. 2. c. 8. sect. 10. p. 639. {f} Nat. Hist. 1. 37. c. 7. {g} Ibid. 1. 6. c. 29. {h} Ut supra, (De Vestitu Sacerd. Heb. 1. 2.) c. 10. sect. 4. p. 653. {i} Apud De Dieu

in loc. Exodus 28:18 Ver. 18. And the second row shall be an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. The first of these stones is by both the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan rendered an "emerald", as by us; and which is described by Pliny {k} as of a green colour, exceeding delightful and pleasant, and to which he gives the third place among precious stones; though by many the stone here called Nophec is thought to be the carbuncle, and is so rendered by the Septuagint; the carbuncle of the ancients is no other than what we call the, "ruby"; and which Braunius {l} thinks is here meant, and so Abarbinel, which is just making an exchange of the last stone of the first row for this; and De Dieu observes, that if any chooses to render the preceding stone an emerald, as Braunius does, he must render this a carbuncle or ruby; and if he renders that a carbuncle, then he must this for an emerald. The next stone is "the sapphire", of which one would think there could be no doubt, it is the very Hebrew word itself that is here used; which Ruæus {m} says is of a sky colour, and sparkles with golden spots or specks, with which agrees Job 28:6. The third stone of this row is the "diamond" or adamant; and that this stone is meant seems clear from its name Jahalom, which comes from a word which signifies to break; and from hence a hammer has its name, because this stone pierces, cuts, and breaks other stones, but cannot be broken itself. On these three stones were engraved, according to the Jerusalem Targum, the names of the three tribes of Judah, Issachar and Zebulun; but more truly, according to the Targum of Jonathan, the names of the tribes of Judah, Dan and Naphtali, and so Jarchi; for the names here, as on the onyx stones, were according to the order of their birth. {k} Ut supra, (Nat. Hist. l. 37.) c. 5. {l} Ut supra, (De Vestitu Sacerd. Heb. l. 2.) c. 11. sect. 2, 7. p. 661, 667. {m} De Gemmis, l. 2. c. 2.

Exodus 28:19 Ver. 19. And the third row, a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. The first of these stones, the ligure or lyncurius, is said to be so called from the congealed urine of the lynx {n}, but rather from the spots of that creature; for, according to Danaeus {o}, it is the same stone with that called "stellina", from having many specks like stars spread about in it. Braunius {p} takes the "jacinth" stone to be here meant, and so does Ainsworth; see Re 21:20, the second stone, the agate, is well known; and though now of little account, was formerly in great esteem, as Pliny {q} asserts, and therefore may well be thought to have a place among these stones. Pyrrhus king of Epirus had a very famous one, in which, not by art, but by nature, were seen the nine Muses, and Apollo holding an harp; the word for it here is "shebo", which comes from a word which signifies to captivate; because, as De Dieu observes, this stone is easily captivated under the hand of the artificer; there being no stone which so easily admits of engravings as this. The last of this row is the "amethyst"; which stone has its name either from its being of the colour of wine; or, as others, from its being a preservative from drunkenness: the Hebrew word "achlamah" seems to come from a word which signifies to dream; and this stone is supposed to cause persons to dream, as Aben Ezra, from one of their wise men, relates. On these three stones, according to the Jerusalem Targum, were written the names of the tribes of Dan, Naphtali, and Gad;

but, according to the Targum of Jonathan, Gad, Asher, and Issachar, which is much better, for a reason before given. {n} Vid. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 37. c. 3. {o} Apud De Dieu in loc. {p} Ut supra, (De Vestitu Sacerd. Heb. l. 2.) c. 14. sect. 9. p. 699. {q} Nat. Hist. l. 37. c. 10. Exodus 28:20 Ver. 20. And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper,.... Whatever stone is meant by the first in this row, it must be of a sea green colour; for "tarshish", the word used, signifies the sea; and so the beryl, as Pliny {r} says, imitates the greenness of the pure sea. Braunius {s} takes it to be the chrysolite that is meant; and so does Ainsworth; and it is so rendered by the Septuagint; and this, according to Ruæus {t}, is of a colour like the greenness of the sea: the "onyx" has its name from its being of the colour of a man's nail, as observed before; but here "shoham" is thought by Braunius {u} to be the "sardonyx", following Josephus, Jerom, and the Vulgate Latin version, which is a compound of the sardian and onyx stones: the last is undoubtedly rightly rendered the jasper, for the Hebrew word is "jaspeh": this stone is sometimes variegated with spots like a panther, and therefore is called by Onkelos "pantere"; the most valuable is the green spotted with red or purple: they shall be set in gold in their enclosings; or be set and enclosed in ouches or sockets of gold, as the two onyx stones upon the shoulder pieces of the ephod: there were twelve of these ouches or sockets, which might be made out of one piece of gold, into which the twelve above stones were put. These stones were, no doubt, brought out of Egypt by the children of Israel, and were the gifts of their princes. {r} Nat. Hist. l. 37. c. 5. {s} Ut supra, (De Vestitu Sacerd Heb. l. 2.) c. 17. sect. 7. p. 720. {t} De Gemmis, l. 2. c. 7. {u} Ut supra, (De Vestitu Sacerd Heb. l. 2.) c. 18. sect. 4. p. 730. Exodus 28:21 Ver. 21. And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names,.... And just so many are reckoned up in the preceding verses, each of which had one or other of the names of the children of Israel engraved on them, according to the order of their names in their birth. Some have thought that Levi's name was omitted, but their reason for it seems not sufficient; for why might not he bear the name of his own tribe, and represent that as well as the rest, since the whole Israel of God is represented by his antitype? [like] the engravings of a net, everyone with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes; not like the impression of a seal on wax, then the letters indeed would have been protuberant, as some have thought; but these were like the engravings of a seal, in which the letters or figures are cut within it: these twelve stones, with the names on them, represent the twelve tribes of Israel, and they the whole spiritual Israel of God; and being precious stones, show the excellency of the people of God, of what value, and in what esteem they are with God and Christ, being their jewels and peculiar treasure; and their names being in them, denote the special and particular knowledge God has of them, their names being written in heaven in the book of life; and they are called by name by the Lord; and being engraved as a signet, is an emblem of their being set as a seal on the arm and heart of Christ, and of their being as dear and precious to him as a signet on a man's right hand; and being set in ouches and

enclosures of gold, express both the dignity and excellency, and the careful preservation of them: these were set in rows, as members of churches are, everyone in his order, rank, and station, 1Co 12:18. Exodus 28:22Ver. 22. And thou shall make upon the breastplate chains at the ends,.... One end of them to be put to the breastplate, and the other end to the ouches on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, by which the breastplate hung from thence: the Targum of Jonathan renders it, chains of a certain determined size, of length and thickness exactly alike; or terminable ones, as it may be rendered, not circular like a locket, or chain of gold worn about the neck, but that had ends to it: some interpret it chains, made like ropes, in the same manner as cables are, twisted together; and such it is certain they were, by what follows:of wreathen work of pure gold; not of circles and ringlets of gold coupled together, but of golden wires twisted together, as ropes are. Exodus 28:23Ver. 23. And thou shalt make upon the breastplate two rings of gold,.... On the upper part of it, above, toward the two shoulder pieces of the ephod; these were to put one end of the chains into before mentioned:and shall put the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate; the two upper ends or corners of it, the right and left. Exodus 28:24Ver. 24. And thou shalt put two wreathen chains of gold in the two rings,.... This expresses both how many chains were to be made, which is not before said, and the use of them, or where they were to be put, as well as the use of the rings:[which are] on the ends of the breastplate; the two uppermost ends or corners of it. Exodus 28:25Ver. 25. And the other two ends of the two wreathen chains thou shalt fasten in the two ouches,.... In which the two onyx stones were set on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, and were as buttons to them; probably there were rings to those ouches, into which these ends of the wreathen chains of gold, reaching from the breastplate, were put; or however, by some means or other they were fastened to these ouches or sockets;and put them in the shoulder pieces of the ephod before it; that is, on the ouches upon them, as before observed: into that part or side of the ouches which was to be the fore part of the ephod; so that the breastplate hung by these chains from the shoulder pieces of the ephod, on the fore part of it, upon the breast of the high priest. Exodus 28:26Ver. 26. And thou shall make two rings of gold,....] Two other rings besides those before mentioned:and thou shalt put them upon the two ends of the breastplate; on the other two ends or corners of it:in the border thereof which is in the side of the ephod inward: these were at the two lower ends of the breastplate, towards the ephod on the inside. Exodus 28:27Ver. 27. And two other rings of gold thou shalt make,.... This is the third pair of rings ordered to be made, the two other pair were for the four ends or corners of the breastplate, but this pair was for the ephod:and shalt put them on the two sides of the ephod; one on the right and the other on the left:underneath, towards the fore part thereof; underneath the ephod, yet towards the fore part of it; or rather on the fore part of it, though so as the rings could not be seen:over against the other coupling thereof; either so as to answer to the other coupling of the breastplate to the shoulder pieces of the ephod above; or to the rings at the ends of the breastplate below, with which these

were to be coupled with a lace of blue; and so the word "other" here supplied may be left out:above the curious girdle of the ephod; just above that these rings in the ephod were, to answer to the rings in the lower ends of the breastplate. Exodus 28:28Ver. 28. And they shall bind the breastplate by the rings thereof,.... By the rings at the lower ends of it, as it was by the rings at the upper ends of it to the shoulder pieces of the ephod; or "lift it up", so some interpret it {w} as if it was said, they shall lift up the breastplate to join it with the ephod that is above it:unto the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue; this blue lace was put both into the rings of the breastplate and into the rings of the ephod, and so being tied in a knot, fastened them together, as the shoulder pieces of the ephod and the breastplate were coupled above, with wreathen chains of gold put into rings: now this was done,that it may be above the curious girdle of the ephod: that the breastplate might be above it, or else the lace of blue:and that the breastplate be not loosed from the ephod: but be kept tight and close to it by the wreathen chains above, and by the knots of blue lace below; which may denote the conjunction of the prophetic and priestly offices in Christ; the former being signified by the breastplate of judgment, in which the Urim and Thummim were, and the latter by the ephod; or else the union of the saints to Christ, the bond of which is everlasting love, from which there can be no separation; this union can never be dissolved, his people can never be loosed from him, they are members of his body, and one spirit with him. {w} R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 89. 2. Exodus 28:29Ver. 29. And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart,.... Their names being engraven on the stones, and the stones put into the breastplate of judgment, and this breastplate hanging down upon the breast and heart of Aaron, he was a representative of the twelve tribes of Israel, as Christ his antitype is the representative of the whole Israel of God; and who lie near the heart of Christ, are set as a seal upon it, are engraven on the palms of his hands, and carried in his bosom, and whom he always presents to his divine Father, and are accepted in him: he represented them in eternity, and in time; in his sufferings and death, in his burial and resurrection from the dead, when they were crucified, buried, and raised with him; and he represents them now in heaven, where they sit together in heavenly places in him, as it here follows in the type:when he goeth in unto the holy place; to trim the lamps and offer incense, and especially when he went into the most holy place once a year:for a memorial before the Lord continually; for a memorial to himself, to pray for them when he appeared before the Lord, to put the Lord in remembrance of his covenant with them, and promises to them,See Gill on "Ex 28:12" see Gill on "Isa 43:26", the Targum of Jonathan is, "for a good memorial": not a memorial for evil, but for good. Exodus 28:30Ver. 30. And thou shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim,.... What these interpreters are at a loss about, both Jewish and Christian; some have confessed their ignorance of them, have conjectured they were only these two words and put in the duplicature of the breastplate; that the name of Jehovah, with other divine were put there and so called; and some have that they

were little images, the same with the teraphim, the high priest carried in the folds of breastplate, by which consultation was made; others have thought them to be a work purely divine, of Jehovah's putting there; for my own part I am to follow Josephus {x}, who takes them to be the same with the twelve stones; and it is observable that where the stones are mentioned nothing is said of the Urim and Thummim, and where the Urim and Thummim are observed, no notice is taken of the stones, see Ex 39:10 the use of these was to have the names of the children of Israel engraven upon them, and so be borne on the heart of Aaron when he went into the holy place, as is here said of the Urim and Thummim; and that consultation might be made by them in matters of moment and difficulty, as appears from various other passages of the Scripture, Nu 27:21 and but in what manner this was done, and in what way the answer was given and understood, are not easily accounted for: some say, by the brightness or protuberance of the letters on the stones; others, by the shining and splendour of the stones, which is more probable; others, by an inward impression on the mind of the priest; and others, by an articulate voice, which seems best of all: the Septuagint render these two words "manifestation and truth"; and Aelianus {y} reports, that the chief and oldest among the Egyptian priests and judges wore an image of a sapphire stone about his neck, which they called "truth": and, according to Diodorus Siculus {z}, this image was of more precious stones than one; for he says, the president in the Egyptian courts of judicature had on his neck, hanging on a golden chain, an image of precious stones, which they called truth: but there is no reason to believe that this custom was as ancient as the times of the Israelites in Egypt, or that they borrowed this from them; but rather, that the Egyptians did this in imitation of what the high priest among the Jews wore, which they might learn from the Jews in Solomon's time, or in later ages; the words Urim and Thummim signify "lights and perfections", agreeably to which is the paraphrase of Jonathan; "Urim, which enlighten their words, and manifest the hidden things of the house of Israel, and Thummim, which perfect their works, by the high priest, who seeks instruction from the Lord by them:" they were typical of Christ, in whom all lights and perfections are; all light is in him; the light of nature and reason is from him, as the Creator, and is given to every man that comes into the world; the light of grace is with him, and communicated to all his people at conversion, and in all the after degrees and supplies of it; all light and knowledge in divine things is from him, the knowledge of God, of himself, and of the Gospel, and the truths of it; and the light of glory will be from him: all the perfections of deity, the whole fulness of the Godhead, all human perfections, which make him as man in all things like unto us, but far exceeding us; as Mediator, all the blessings and promises of the covenant are in him; all the gifts of the Spirit, and a fulness of all grace; there are in him perfect righteousness, perfect holiness, all light, life, strength, wisdom, joy, and comfort {a}: and these stones, or Urim and Thummim, may be an emblem also of the saints, being made light and perfect righteousness in Christ, from whom they have both: and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before

the Lord; either into the holy or into the most holy place, just as the names of the children of Israel on the stones are said to be, See Gill on "Ex 28:29", and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually; not only bear their names and remember their cases, make intercession for them, and represent their persons, in all which he was a type of Christ, but bear their judgment, have that at heart, and administer it unto them; and in all doubtful and difficult cases inquire of God what was fit and right to do for them, or for them to do: so Christ has the government of his people both at heart and in his hands; all judgment is committed to him, and he is the righteousness of his people now, and will be their Judge hereafter. {x} Antiqu. l. 3. c. 7. sect. 5. {y} Var. Hist. l. 14. c. 34. {z} Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 68. {a} See a Discourse of mine, called Levi's Urim and Thummim, found with Christ, &c. published in 1725. Exodus 28:31 Ver. 31. And thou shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. This was a different garment from the ephod, was longer than that, and was under it, and of different materials: that was made of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine linen; this only of linen, and wholly of a blue colour, without any curious figures upon it, as were on that: in Ex 39:22, it is said to be of woven work; it was woven from top to bottom, and had no seam in it: so Josephus says {b}, "the coat did not consist of two parts, nor was it sewed upon the shoulder, nor on the side, but was one long piece of woven work;" and such was the seamless coat our Lord Jesus Christ wore, literally understood, Joh 19:23 and both were an emblem of his perfect righteousness, which has nothing of the works of men joined to it, to justify them before God, and make them acceptable to him: for this robe signifies the robe of Christ's righteousness, the best robe; it has its name from a word which signifies prevarication or sin, because it covers the sins of God's people; the matter of it was linen, and so fitly points at the fine linen, that is the righteousness of the saints, and being blue or sky coloured may denote heaven and happiness, which that entitles to, see Mt 5:20, the Septuagint version calls it a garment down to the feet, using the same word as in Re 1:13 and fitly agrees with that righteousness with which all Christ's members are covered and justified, Isa 45:24. {b} Antiqu. l. 3. c. 7. sect. 4. Exodus 28:32 Ver. 32. And there shall be a hole in the top of it, in the midst thereof,.... At the neck of it, for the high priest to put his head through when he put it on: it shall have a binding of woven work round about the hole of it; a large hem or selvage, perhaps of the same kind of woven stuff the robe itself was made of, and this was done to strengthen it: as it were the hole of an habergeon; a corslet or coat of mail; that it be not rent; when the high priest put it on; or through the weight of the ephod and the ouches of gold on the shoulder pieces of it, and the breastplate hanging down from thence; this may denote the strength and duration of Christ's righteousness, which is an everlasting one. Exodus 28:33 Ver. 33. And beneath upon the hem of it,.... Or the skirts of it, at the bottom of the robe: thou shalt make pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, round about the hem thereof; these were figures made of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn, in the form of pomegranates: Jarchi says they were round and

hollow, and made like hens' eggs, about the size of them, and of an oval form: and bells of gold between them round about; according to some, the bells were put into the pomegranates, which is supposed to be the meaning of the phrase "between them", or, "in the midst of them"; and so Aben Ezra observes, that some say the bells did not appear, they were only in the midst of the pomegranates, and there they caused their sound to be heard: but according to our version and others, the bells were placed between the pomegranates, between every pomegranate and pomegranate there was a golden bell; and this seems to be plainly the sense of the following verse. Exodus 28:34 Ver. 34. A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate,.... First a golden bell and then a pomegranate, then a bell and then a pomegranate again, and so on: upon the hem of the robe round about; all round the hem or skirts of the robe were they placed in this manner: the Targum of Jonathan says, the sum or number of them were seventy one; but Maimonides {c} says there were seventy two, thirty six in each skirt; and so says R. Levi Ben Gersom; but Clemens of Alexandria {d} has increased the number to three hundred and sixty six, according to the days of the year, and thinks they signified the acceptable year of the Lord proclaiming and resounding the great appearance of the Saviour: "golden bells" may denote either the intercession of Christ in heaven, which if not vocal, as on earth, has a speech or sound in it, which is understood: his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, call aloud for peace and pardon, and it is a sound that is always heard with delight; the matter of them being gold may denote the preciousness and excellency of Christ's intercession, and the duration of it; and being on the hem of the robe shows that Christ's righteousness is that on which his intercession depends, and from whence it has its efficacy: or else these bells may be an emblem of the Gospel, as preached by Christ himself, and by his apostles and ministers, compared to "bells" for sound; the sound of the Gospel being a sound of love, grace, mercy, peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation; a joyful sound, like that of the jubilee, an even and certain one, different from that of the law, and exceeding musical and delightful; and to "golden" bells for the preciousness of it, and its truths, and for its duration; and being on the hem of the robe may signify that in the Gospel the righteousness of Christ is revealed and pointed at, and that faith in this righteousness comes hereby; "the pomegranates" on Aaron might be an emblem of his priesthood, and of the ceremonial law, and of the good things they were shadows and types of; and of Christ himself, and of the virtue, odour, and fragrancy of his sufferings, sacrifice, and intercession; and also of the church, called an orchard of pomegranates, So 4:13 consisting of various members, as the pomegranate of various grains; the juice of which the blood of Christ may resemble, in which those members swim and are washed; and who are of a grateful odour to God, and are surrounded by his power and love; and their hanging upon the hem of the robe may signify the acceptableness of them through the righteousness, sacrifice, and mediation of Christ, and the fruits of good works, which both the righteousness of Christ and the Gospel produce; and particularly the bells and pomegranates may signify that sound doctrine

and a savoury life and conversation should go together in the priests of the Lord, in the ministers of his word. {c} Hilchot Cele Hamikdash, c. 9. sect. 4. {d} Stromat. l. 5. p. 564. Exodus 28:35 Ver. 35. And it shall be upon Aaron to minister,.... That is, the robe before described shall be put upon him, that he might minister in the priest's office, for without this, as well as the other garments, he might not: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out; by means of which the priests would have notice that they might depart, and he be alone in his ministrations; or rather, that the people might know his going out and coming in, and so give themselves up to prayer, while he was offering incense, see Lu 1:9 though the instance of Zacharias is not of an high priest, but of a common priest: that he die not the Targum of Jonathan adds, with flaming fire. This is added, to make him, and all succeeding priests, careful that this robe, nor any other of the priestly garments, were wanting, when they ministered before the Lord; should any be wanting, it would be highly resented by the Lord: and such an one would be in danger of being cut off by death from the immediate hand of God, as Nadab and Abihu were for offering strange fire to the Lord; for, according to the Jewish writers {e}, a priest not rightly attired, either with more or fewer garments than he should have, his service was illegal, and he was as a stranger, and his service strange service, unacceptable to God, yea, provoking to him; and so Jarchi on the text says, if he wanted one of these garments, he was guilty of death by the hand of heaven, the immediate hand of God. {e} Maimon. Cele Hamikdash, c. 10. sect. 4, 5. Exodus 28:36 Ver. 36. And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold,.... It was, as Jarchi says, two fingers broad, and reached from ear to ear, and so Maimonides {f}; it is sometimes called the holy crown, and the plate of the holy crown, Ex 29:6, this was a priestly crown, for priests were very honourable and dignified persons, especially the high priest among the Jews; and even among the Gentiles it was common for their kings to be priests: and though this crown may denote the kingly power of Christ, yet as residing in him who is a priest, for he is a priest on his throne, Zec 6:13, and so may signify the conjunction of the kingly and priestly offices in Christ, who has a crown of pure gold given him by his Father, and put upon him, and by his people, Ps 21:4 and being of pure gold, holy, and on the forehead, as this plate was, may signify the purity and holiness of Christ's kingdom and office, the glory, visibility, and perpetuity of it: and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD; which words were written either in two lines, or in one. If in two, Maimonides {g} says, the word "holiness" was above, and to "the Lord" below: but it might be written in one line, and that seems most likely: he also says the letters were protuberant, or stood out; but then they would not be graven like the engravings of a signet, in which the letters or figures are engraved within, but like the impressions of a signet made on wax, or other things: in this the high priest was a type of Christ, who is holy in himself, in his person, in both his natures, divine and human, in his offices of prophet, priest, and King; and he is holiness itself, the most holy, essentially, infinitely, and

perfectly so, as angels and men are not, and the source and spring of holiness to others: and he is holiness to the Lord for his people; he is so representatively; as their covenant head he has all grace in his hands for them, and they have it in him; this is sanctification in Christ, and is by virtue of union to him, and is complete and perfect, and the cause of holiness in his people; and he is so by imputation. The holiness of his human nature was not a mere qualification for his office, or only exemplary to us, but is with his obedience and sufferings imputed to us for justification. Moreover, Christ has by his blood sanctified his people, or made atonement for them, and procured the cleansing of them from their sins, or the expiation of them; and he is also the efficient cause of their internal holiness by his Spirit, without which there is no seeing God, 1Co 6:11. {f} Cele Hamikdash, c. 9. sect. 1. Vid. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 63. 2. & Succah, fol. 5. 1. {g} Cele Hamikdash, c. 9. sect. 1. Vid. T. Bab, Sabbat, fol. 63. 2. & Succah, fol. 5. 1. Exodus 28:37Ver. 37. And thou shalt put it on a blue lace,.... The plate of gold:that it may be upon the mitre; either the plate or the lace; the lace is the nearest antecedent, but it seems by what follows it should be the plate:upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be; the plate of gold; the mitre was of linen, a wrap of linen about the head, and was like a turban on it, in the top of it; it did not come down low upon the forehead, but left that bare for this plate of gold to be put upon it. Jarchi seems to understand all this of the lace, by comparing it with the following verse, and Ex 39:31 as if the plate was represented as in the lace, and the lace upon the plate and upon the mitre above; all which he thinks is to be reconciled by observing, that the plate had three holes, and in every hole was a blue lace, and each lace was divided into two parts, so that there were six in all, two laces at each end of the plate, and two in the middle, by which they were fastened upon the top of the mitre, by which it was kept from falling off; and of this middle lace, he thinks, the text is to be understood. The Targum of Jonathan observes, that this plate was put on a blue lace, to make atonement for the impudent. Exodus 28:38Ver. 38. And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead,.... That is, the plate of gold, with the inscription on it, holiness to the Lord, and so was very visible and legible. The Targum of Jonathan adds, from temple to temple, that is, from the furthest end of the one, to the furthest end of the other, the same as from ear to ear, See Gill on "Ex 28:36" the use of it follows:that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; this supposes that the sacrifices of the children of Israel, which they brought to the priests to offer for them, or the gifts they devoted to sacred use, might be attended with sin and blame, either in the matter of their offerings and gifts, or in the manner in which they brought them; and which through the high priest having this plate of gold, with the above inscription on it, were expiated; they were bore away from them, and were not placed to their account, but they were cleared and discharged of them: and so it is that there is sin in the best performances of the saints; there is not a just man that does good, but he sins in doing that good; the best righteousness of men is imperfect, and attended with sin; and this cannot be borne, or

taken away by themselves; if God should mark such sins as these, they could not stand before him; now Christ, their High Priest, bears and takes away these, along with all others, which are laid upon him, and borne by him: and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord; not that he had always this plate of gold on his forehead, only in time of service; but then it was continually for the acceptance of them, though it was not upon his forehead, as Jarchi observes; at Maimonides {h} says, there was great necessity that the high priest should be always in the sanctuary, as it is said, "it shall be always upon his forehead", and therefore must be always there, for he might not wear it outside of it. This with respect to the antitype may signify, that the persons and services of the people of God are accepted with him through the holiness and righteousness of Christ, who is always in the presence of the Lord, ever appears in heaven for them, and is the Lamb of God, to whose person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, they are directed to look for the removal of their sins of every sort. {h} Moreh Nevochim, par. 3. c. 47. Exodus 28:39 Ver. 39. And thou shall embroider the coat of fine linen,.... Which was a distinct garment from the ephod, and from the robe of the ephod, and was the innermost of all; it was made of fine linen, curiously wrought in the weaving of it: according to some, it was full of a sort of eyelet holes; but as the word is that, from whence comes that for ouches, Ex 28:6. Jarchi thinks it was full of holes, like those ouches or sockets, in which the stones were set; and so this coat was decked and adorned with gems and precious stones stuck in those holes or ouches: but rather it was figured with such little cornered holes as are in the stomach of animals that chew the cud, called the "reticulum"; being in the form of network, as Maimonides {i} observes, and which is approved by Braunius {k}: this was an emblem of the righteousness of Christ, comparable to fine linen richly embroidered, decked and adorned with jewels, and curiously wrought, see Re 19:8: and thou shalt make the mitre of fine linen: which was a wrap of linen sixteen cubits long, as Maimonides {l} says, both for the high priest, and for common priests, which only differed in the manner of wrapping them; that for the high priest was wrapped fold upon fold, as a roller for a plaster, and so the mitre was flat upon the head, and was like a turban, and did not rise up into a point; but those of the common priests were so wrapped, as that they arose up like a night cap, or a high crowned hat. The mitre, hat, or cap, though a token of honour, yet also of servitude; and may denote, that the people of the Jews were in a state of servitude, and point at the obscurity and darkness of that dispensation; they not clearly discerning divine mysteries, and wanting boldness and freedom to look up to God; or it may denote that the priests under the law were servants, and that Christ, our great High Priest, should appear in the form of one; and may also point at the intensesness of the mind in them and him on business, being deaf to everything else. The Targum of Jonathan says, the coat of fine linen was to atone for the shedding of innocent blood, and the mitre to atone for those who have elated thoughts, are puffed up with pride and vain conceit: and thou shall make the girdle of needlework; to gird about the

embroidered coat, which Josephus {m} says was four fingers broad; but, according to Maimonides {n}, it was about three fingers broad, and thirty two cubits long, which they wound about and about; and though we translate it "needlework", it should rather be the "work of the embroiderer", as Ainsworth renders it: and this was not wrought by the needle, but in weaving; for, as Maimonides {o} observes,"they did not make any of the priests' garments with needlework, but the work of the weaver, according to Ex 39:27."This girdle may denote the strength, readiness, faithfulness, and integrity of Christ in the performance of his priestly office; see Isa 11:5. {i} Cele Hamikdash, c. 8. sect. 16. {k} De Vestitu Sacerdot. Heb. 1. 1. c. 17. p. 379, 380. {l} Ut supra, (Cele Hamikdash) c. 8. sect. 19. {m} Antiqu. 1. 3. c. 7. sect. 2. {n} Ut supra. (Cele Hamikdash, c. 8. sect. 19.) {o} Ibid. Exodus 28:40Ver. 40. And for Aaron's sons thou shalt make coats,.... Of fine linen, of woven work, as in Ex 39:27, these were different from the broidered coat of the high priest, and the blue robe of the ephod:and thou shalt make for them girdles; linen ones, to gird up their linen coats, which were long, that they might the more expeditiously perform their service; and which is an instruction to all the priests of the Lord, true believers in Christ, to be ready, forward, and diligent in the work of the Lord; and especially to ministers of the word, who, as their doctrines and lives ought to be pure, signified by the priest's linen garment, so they should be girt about with the girdle of truth, and ready upon all occasions to publish and defend it, and to do their work with cheerfulness and faithfulness:and bonnets shall thou make for them: these were coverings for the head, and of the same kind with the mitre of the high priest, and of the same length, but differed from that in the manner of wrapping the linen, of which they were made, See Gill on "Ex 28:39": and all these were to be made for glory and beauty: to beautify and adorn them, to make them look like persons of some note and figure, and that they might be respectable among men, and typical, as they all were, of our great and glorious High Priest, the Son of God. Exodus 28:41Ver. 41. And thou shalt put them on Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him,.... And this putting on of their garments by Moses, under the authority of God, was a solemn investiture of them with the priestly office also; for from henceforward they had a right to exercise it, having those garments on, without which they were never to officiate:and shall anoint them; with the anointing oil, of which afterwards a particular account is given, and how to be made, and for what use, Ex 30:22, typical of the holy graces of the Spirit of God:and consecrate them; the consecration of them was by investing them with their garments, and by anointing them with oil; for this phrase does not intend the whole of their consecration, only another branch of it, and may be literally rendered, "fill their hand" {p}; that is, with sacrifices to be offered up by them, see Ex 29:1 and sanctify them; by all this, set them apart, and devote them to the sacred office of priesthood:that they may minister unto me in the priest's office; by offering sacrifices for the people, burning incense, and doing other things relative to the office. {p} Mdy ta talmw "et implebis manum eorum", Montanus, Vatablus, Tigurine version, Fagius, Piscator.

Exodus 28:42 Ver. 42. And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness,.... Or "the flesh of nakedness" {q}, that part of the body which ought not to be naked and exposed to view, and which, when it is, causes shame and ridicule; what part is designed is easily gathered from the next clause; great care was taken, in the service of God's house, to preserve decency, prevent immodesty, and to guard against laughter and levity, and the like care should be always taken, See Gill on "Ex 28:2", from the loins even unto the thigh they shall reach; they were to reach above the navel near the heart, and to the end of the thigh, which is the knee, as Maimonides says {r}; who also observes, that they had strings, but had no opening before or behind, but were drawn up round like a purse; they were a sort of drawers, and somewhat like our sailors' trousers. {q} hwre rvb "carnem nuditatis", Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius; "carnem nudam", Junius & Tremellius; "carnem verendorum", Tigurine version; "carnem pudendorum", Piscator. {r} Cele Hamikdash, c. 8. sect. 18.

Exodus 28:43 Ver. 43. And they shall be upon Aaron and upon his sons,.... Not the linen breeches only, but all the other garments: when they come into the tabernacle of the congregation; even into that part of it where the people assembled, the court of the tabernacle, and where stood the altar of burnt offering, on which they offered the sacrifices of the people, but never without the priestly garments on: or when they came near unto the altar to minister in the holy place; at the altar of incense which stood there; or when they came to trim the lamps of the candlestick, and set the shewbread on the table, and take away the old, which candlestick and shewbread table were both in the holy place, that they bear not iniquity and die; be guilty of sin in not having their priestly garments on in time of service, and so bear the punishment of it and die for it; the Targum of Jonathan adds, with flaming fire, with fire from heaven, such as Nadab and Abihu were afterwards consumed with; an high priest that had not the eight garments on, or a common priest that had not his four garments, his service was illegal and rejected, and he was guilty of death by the hand of heaven, as Maimonides {s} says; that is, he was deserving of immediate death from the hand of God, and might expect it: it shall be a statute for ever unto him, and his seed after him; as long as the Aaronic priesthood continued, until Christ should arise, made an high priest, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedek, and should put an end to the priesthood of the former, by answering and fulfilling all the types and shadows of it; this respects all that is said in this chapter concerning the vestments of the priests, one and another. {s} Cele Hamikdash, c. 10. sect. 4, 5.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 29:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 29

This chapter gives an account of the form and order of the consecration of Aaron and his sons to the priestly office; preparatory to which Moses is ordered to take a young bullock, two rams, bread, cakes, and wafers unleavened, and bring them and Aaron and his sons to the door of the congregation, where the ceremony was to be publicly performed, and which began with washing them, [Ex 29:1](#) and then proceeded by putting on the priestly garments directed to be made in the preceding chapter, first on Aaron, who also was anointed, [Ex 29:5](#) and then upon his sons, [Ex 29:8](#) after which the bullock and the two rams were to be slain, and orders are given what was to be done with their blood, and the several parts of them, as well as with the cakes and wafers, [Ex 29:10](#) and directions are given to make these wave and heave offerings, [Ex 29:24](#) and that the garments of Aaron's should be his son's that succeeded him, [Ex 29:29](#), and that the flesh of the ram of consecration with the bread should be eaten by Aaron and his sons and no other, [Ex 29:31](#), the altar also where they were to officiate was to be cleansed, sanctified, and an atonement made for it, [Ex 29:36](#) after which two lambs every day, morning and evening, were to be offered on it in all succeeding generations, [Ex 29:38](#), and the chapter is closed with a promise that the Lord would meet with the children of Israel at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and would sanctify the tabernacle, and dwell among them, and be their God, [Ex 29:43](#).

Ver. 1. **And this is the thing that thou shalt do unto them**,.... To Aaron and his sons: to "hallow" them; to sanctify them, set them apart, and consecrate them:

to minister unto me in the priest's office; for which the Lord had appointed them, to which he had chose, called, and separated them:

take one young bullock, and two rams without blemish; a young bullock was an heifer of three years old, according to Kimchi {t}, and such an one was used in sacrifice in former times, see

[Ge 15:9](#) though Maimonides {u} says it was one of two years, and so Abendana {w}, whose words are,

"a bullock is a son of two years, and a ram is after he has entered into the second year thirty one days;"

and so Ben Gersom; the bullock was an emblem of the strength, laboriousness, and patience of Christ, and both of them being without blemish, were typical of his purity and perfection in his nature and life, and especially in his sacrifice.

{t} Comment. in Psal. lxxix. 32. {u} Hilchot Zebachim, c. 1. sect. 14. {w} Not. in Miclol Yophi in loc.

[Exodus 29:2](#)

Ver. 2. **And unleavened bread**,.... Such as used to be eaten at the time of the passover, and this being distinguished from cakes and wafers, after mentioned, shows that this was bread of a larger size, a loaf or loaves of bread, see [Ex 29:3](#)

and cakes unleavened, tempered with oil; these were made of flour mixed with oil, but without leaven, and were a lesser and thinner sort of bread than the former:

and wafers unleavened, anointed with oil; with oil olive, the best of oil, as the Targum of Jonathan, and so Aben Ezra; these were a thinner sort of bread still, somewhat like our pancakes; and they were anointed with oil after the baking of them, and in the form of the Greek c, "chi", as Jarchi says, or of a St. Andrew's or Burgundian cross:

of wheaten flour shall thou make them; of the finest of the wheat, for these were to be the food of Aaron and his sons, who were now to be invested with an high and honourable office, and were to live according to the dignity of it; and these being all unleavened, may denote that sincerity, simplicity, and integrity that ought to be found in them, in the discharge of their office, and which were in Christ in full perfection; as well as soundness in doctrine, life, and manners, being free from all leaven of false doctrine, hypocrisy, and malice; and likewise what is expected of the same kind in all the saints, who, under the Gospel dispensation, are all of them priests unto God, and whose food is the finest of the wheat, Christ the bread of life.

[Exodus 29:3](#)

Ver. 3. **And thou shalt put them into one basket**,.... The unleavened bread, cakes and wafers; this basket may be an emblem of the Gospel and the ministration of it, in which Christ the bread of life is carried, and ministered to his people:

and bring them in the basket, with the bullock and the two rams; not that the bullock and the rams were to be brought in the basket along with the bread, cakes, and wafers;

but at the same time that they were brought to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, these were to be brought, led, or drove to the altar, in order to be slain and sacrificed.

[Exodus 29:4](#)

Ver. 4. **And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation,**.... That is, order and direct them to come thither; for it cannot be thought he was to carry them in his arms or on his shoulders, or have them thither by force, whether they would or not; but he was to declare to them that it was the will of the Lord they should appear there:

and shalt wash them with water; out of the laver after mentioned, which stood between the door of the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar: the Targum of Jonathan says, this washing was performed in forty seahs of living or spring water, which was sufficient for the immersion of the whole body, which it is highly probable was the case; and so Jarchi interprets it of the dipping of the whole body, and which seems to have been necessary, upon their entrance on their office, to denote their complete purity and holiness, though afterwards, when they entered on service, they only washed their hands and feet, see

[Ex 30:18](#) to which our Lord seems to allude, [Joh 13:10](#) this washing shows what purity and holiness were necessary to the priests of the Lord, and that they ought to be clean that bear the vessels of his house, or minister in his sanctuary, and which were in Christ in their full perfection; and such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, and undefiled, and so could offer himself without spot, and was a fit person to take away sin by sacrifice, and to be an advocate for his people: this may also point at his baptism, which he submitted to before he entered on his office in a public manner, and which was performed by immersion; and in this way ought all his priests, his saints, to be washed, as well as with the washing of regeneration, and with the blood of Christ; and which is necessary to their officiating as priests, or drawing nigh to God, and requisite to their communion with God and Christ.

[Exodus 29:5](#)

Ver. 5. **And thou shall take the garments,**.... The priestly garments before ordered to be made, and when made:

and put upon Aaron the coat: the brodered coat, the coat of fine linen, which was put on first and was next to his flesh, for all these garments were put on in the order in

which they are here placed:

and the robe of the ephod: which was all of blue, and had pomegranates and golden bells at the hem of it; this was put over the brodered coat:

and the ephod; which was made of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen: this was a short garment put over the robe of the ephod:

and the breastplate; with the Urim and Thummim in it, or the twelve precious stones on which were engraven the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, which hung down over the breast by wreathen chains of gold, from the shoulder pieces of the ephod:

and gird him with the curious girdle of the ephod; which was made of the same material and after the same manner as the ephod itself, and which girt all his garments tight and close to him; the significance of these has been observed already; and unless thus clothed he could not minister in his office, and these he had only on while ministering in it: no mention is made of the breeches, because these were doubtless to be put on by the high priest himself in a private manner before he came there; whereas all these garments were put on him publicly at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, where it would not have been so seemly and decent to put on the other.

Exodus 29:6

Ver. 6. **And thou shall put the mitre upon his head**,.... Which was made of linen, and was a wrap of linen about his head in the form of a turban:

and put the holy crown upon the mitre; the holy crown was a plate of gold which had these words, "holiness to the Lord", engraven on it; and so says the Targum of Jonathan,

"on which the holy name was engraven;"

the mitre was upon the top of his head, this in the forefront of that; it was upon Aaron's forehead, and reached from ear to ear, and was fastened behind with a blue lace; this was like a crown or a diadem, and denotes the honour and dignity of the priestly office: Christ is a priest on his throne, and his saints are a royal priesthood, even kings as well as priests unto God.

Exodus 29:7

Ver. 7. **Then thou shalt take the anointing oil**, After ordered to be made of principal spices, myrrh, cinnamon, calamus, cassia, and oil olive, [Ex 30:23](#)

and pour it upon his head, and anoint him; this was done, according to Jarchi, in the form of the letter "chi" as before; the oil was put upon his head and between his eyebrows, and he joined them with his finger: Aben Ezra thinks this was done before the mitre was put upon his head, for upon the head was the oil only poured; but Nachmanides was of opinion that the mitre was so folded about the head that the middle of the head was open, and upon that the oil was poured; and so the Talmudists say {x} that his (the high priest's) hair was seen between the plate of gold and the mitre; but however this was, it seems plain from the text that this anointing was after the mitre was put on, and the priest habited with all his garments; and it is also as clear a case, that the ointment was poured on his head, which ran down to his beard, [Ps 133:2](#), and I see no difficulty in supposing that the mitre and crown might be taken off again while the ceremony of anointing was performed. This unction denotes the investiture of Christ with his office in eternity, who is said to be anointed so early, [Pr 8:22](#), and the donation of the Spirit to him in time, without measure; with which he is said to be anointed, both at his incarnation and at his baptism, and also at his ascension to heaven, and hence comes the name of the Messiah, which signifies anointed; and so his people, his priests, are anointed of God, with an unction from him, with the oil of grace, with the graces of the Spirit, which is necessary for their instruction, for the presentation of themselves to as an holy sacrifice, and to make them meet for the heavenly glory.

{x} T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 19. 1.

[Exodus 29:8](#)

Ver. 8. **And thou shalt bring his sons**,.... Order the sons of Aaron to come to the same place where he was:

and put coats upon them: such as were ordered to be made for them, [Ex 28:40](#).

[Exodus 29:9](#)

Ver. 9. **And thou shalt gird them with girdles (Aaron and his sons)**,.... Aaron with the girdle of the ephod, and with the girdle of needlework, and his sons with common

girdles made for them; all which showed what strength, diligence, and expedition were necessary for the discharge of their office:

and put the bonnets on them; upon their heads, which differed only from the high priest's mitre in the manner of rolling or wrapping, as has been observed on [Ex 28:39](#):

and the priest's office shall be theirs for a perpetual statute; that is, shall descend from father to son in Aaron's family throughout all generations, until the Messiah should come; who would be a priest of another order, and put an end to the Aaronic priesthood, by fulfilling what that was a type of, and so abolishing it:

and thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons; or "fill the hand of them"; that is, with sacrifices to offer for themselves and others,
See Gill on "Ex 28:41". The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan are,

"shall offer the offering of Aaron, and the offering of his sons,"

of which there is an after account, and was one part of their consecration.

Exodus 29:10

Ver. 10. **And thou shalt cause a bullock to be brought before the tabernacle of the congregation,**.... The same, or of the same kind he was ordered to take, [Ex 29:1](#), and here the place is expressed where it was to be taken, and what was to be done with it:

and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the bullock; not Aaron first alone, and then his sons, as some have thought, Aben Ezra makes mention of; but, as he says, both together, not one before another; declaring it to be their sacrifice, a vicarious one, one in their room and stead, signifying that they deserved to die as that creature would; and by this act putting, as it were, their sins and transgressions upon it, see [Le 16:21](#) and which was an emblem of the imputation of sin to Christ, and laying upon him the iniquities of us all.

Exodus 29:11

Ver. 11. **And thou shalt kill the bullock before the Lord,**.... That is, Moses is ordered to do it, who now officiated as a priest, "pro tempore", Aaron and his sons not being yet completely invested with that office, or thoroughly consecrated to it; of which consecration this sacrifice was a part, and therefore could not with propriety be

concerned in killing their own sacrifice; for that purpose, Moses therefore did it, and he did it "before the Lord"; Jehovah the Son gave him those orders to do it before Jehovah the Father, in his presence, as an offering to him, and for his acceptance. And the ark, as Aben Ezra observes, was in the middle westward, and right against it was the altar of incense, and opposite that the altar of burnt offering:

by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; that is, as Jarchi interprets it, in the court of the tabernacle before the door; not by the door by which they entered in to the court of the tabernacle; but in the court before the door that leads in to the holy at some distance from which stood the altar of burnt offering, where this bullock was slain and sacrificed: all this may denote the public manner in which Christ, the antitype, suffered in the presence of the Lord, with his knowledge and will, and before the people of Israel.

Exodus 29:12

Ver. 12. **And thou shalt take the blood of the bullock**,.... Being slain, and its blood received into a basin:

and put it upon the horns of the altar with thy finger; not sprinkle it with hyssop, as was done in some cases, but put on with the finger dipped into the blood in the basin; as the horns of the altar were the place where the sacrifice was bound, as some think, or however where persons in distress fled for refuge, and laid hold on, it may figure the blood of Christ, being effectual to the cleansing of their souls, and the remission of their sins, through the application of it to them by the Spirit of God:

and pour all the blood beside at the bottom of the altar; the rest of the blood not put upon the horns of the altar, all that was left of it. Jarchi says, there was a receptacle (for it) that protruded from around the altar, about a cubit from the ground; and here it was that the blood was poured.

Exodus 29:13

Ver. 13. **And thou shalt take all the fat that covereth the inwards**,.... That covered the skin or caul, in which the bowels are contained, called the "omentum", which generally has a pretty deal of fat upon it:

and the caul that is above the liver; which seems to design the diaphragm or midriff; but the Septuagint renders it, "the lobe of the liver"; and Ben Melech says it is to be

interpreted with the liver, for he says he took a little of the liver with the caul:

and the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, and burn them upon the altar; the Targum of Jonathan is, lay them in order on the altar; it is not easy to say, since fat is taken both in a good and bad sense, what is designed by the burning of it: as fat often designs the best, it being burned on the altar may signify that the best is to be given to the Lord, and we are to honour him with the best things we have, which should be devoted to his service; or as fat renders insensible, and stupefies and makes men heavy, and inclines to a carnal and vicious disposition, and the inward parts and reins being the seat of carnal desires, affections, and lusts; it may denote that the inward part of man is very wickedness, and that the inward corruptions of nature, and the carnal affections and fleshly lusts, are to be mortified and destroyed, at least the power of them to be subdued and restrained.

Exodus 29:14

Ver. 14. **But the flesh of the bullock, and his skin, and his dung,**.... The several parts and members of him, head, legs, feet, &c. and the skin taken off of him, and the dung that comes from him. Aben Ezra observes, that the flesh comprehends the head and the pieces, and may be interpreted in a way of conjecture, that he washed it, and afterwards burnt it; all representing a whole Christ under all his painful sufferings, and the shame and reproach he underwent in them:

shalt thou burn with fire without the camp; so Christ, the antitype, suffered without the gates of Jerusalem a most painful and shameful death, despised and reproached by men, and the wrath of God like fire poured out upon him: the apostle seems to refer to this, [Heb 13:11](#),

it is a sin offering; in order to make atonement for the sins of Aaron and his sons; for the law made men priests that had infirmity, and needed offerings and sacrifices for their own sins, which shows the imperfection of the Aaronic priesthood.

Exodus 29:15

Ver. 15. **Thou shalt also take one ram,**.... One of the two he was bid to take, Ex 29:1; and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the ram; confessing their sins, acknowledging their guilt, and by this act transferring the same to the ram, which was to be a burnt offering, and was typical of the imputation of sin to Christ, as before observed. Exodus 29:16 Ver. 16. **And thou shalt slay the ram,**.... As

he was ordered to slay the bullock, acting in this as a priest, as in that:and thou shall take his blood, and sprinkle it round about upon the altar; the blood being received into a basin, it was not to be put upon the altar with the finger, as the blood of the bullock, but was to be sprinkled probably with a bunch of hyssop, round about upon the altar, on the top and sides: as the deity of Christ is the altar which sanctifies every gift, this may signify that his blood has its virtue and efficacy from that, to make atonement for the sins of men, and to cleanse them from them. Exodus 29:17Ver. 17. And thou shalt cut the ram in pieces,... For the better convenience of laying it upon the wood on the altar, that it might be burnt; for it was to be a whole burnt offering:and wash the inwards of him, and his legs; denoting the purity of the sacrifice of Christ, and that when his people give up themselves to God as a whole burnt offering, in the flames of love and zeal, their affections should be pure and sincere:and put [them] unto his pieces, and unto his head; lay them together, so that they might be entirely consumed at once; signifying that Christ was both in soul and body an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour to God; zeal for the honour of whose house, and the glory of his name, ate him up, as well as the fire of divine wrath; and so our whole souls, bodies and spirits, should be presented to the Lord as a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice to him, which is more strongly suggested in the next verse. Exodus 29:18Ver. 18. And thou shalt burn the whole ram upon the altar,... For which reason his head, his pieces, his inwards, and his legs, were to be put together, and laid in order upon the altar:it is a burnt offering unto the Lord; offered up to him, and accepted by him, as follows:it is a sweet savour; or "a smell of rest" {y}, in which God acquiesces, and rests, and takes delight and pleasure; it is, as the Septuagint version,for a smell of sweet savour, or a sweet smelling savour; which phrase the apostle makes use of, and applies to the sacrifice of Christ, Eph 5:2:an offering made by fire unto the Lord; which being consumed by fire ascended upwards to the Lord, and became acceptable to him, as the sacrifice of his own Son, in his fiery sufferings and death, was unto him. {y} xwxyn xyr "odor quietis", Montanus, Fagius, Vatablus, Cartwright, Piscator. Exodus 29:19Ver. 19. And thou shall take the other ram,... The other of the two that was left, Ex 29:1:and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands on the head of the ram, as they were to do, and did, upon the head of the other;See Gill on "Ex 29:15". Exodus 29:20Ver. 20. Then shall thou kill the ram,... As the other:and take of his blood, some part of it being received into a basin:and put it upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons; according to Jarchi, this is the middle gristle within the ear; but Saadiah more rightly says it is the tender part which joins to the orb of the ear. The blood was put upon this part to sanctify it, and cleanse from sins that come thereby, and to teach the high priest that he ought attentively to listen to what should be said unto him of the Lord, that he might faithfully report it to the people; and as our great High Priest had his ear opened and awakened, to hear as the learned; and happy are his people who have ears to hear the joyful sound, and take pleasure in it, and who are cleansed from their hearing sins,

by his precious blood:and upon the thumb of their right hand; on the middle joint of it, as Jarchi:and upon the great toe of the right foot; the hands and fingers being the instruments of action, and the feet and toes of walking, show that the life and conversation of the priests of the Lord ought to be pure and holy, and so their antitype perfectly was; and whereas there is imperfection in all the actions, and even in the best righteousness of the saints, and their walk and conversation is not without sin, they have need to have them sprinkled with, and their conversation garments washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb:and sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about; as was done with the blood of the other ram, Ex 29:16. Exodus 29:21Ver. 21. And thou shalt take of the blood that is upon the altar,.... Not that which was sprinkled upon it, which could not be gathered up in such quantities as to be sprinkled again; but which was in a basin on it, having been received into it when the ram was slain:and of the anointing oil; hereafter to be made, and with which Aaron was anointed as soon as he had his garments on; and this is a different anointing from that that was poured on his head; this was sprinkled on his garments, as follows:and sprinkle it upon Aaron; both the blood and the oil:and upon his garments; the note of Aben Ezra is, under the garments of Aaron, and on his garments, as if they were sprinkled within and without:and upon his sons, and upon the garments of his sons with him; at his first unction his sons do not seem to have been anointed at all, but now they and their garments are sprinkled both with blood and oil; denoting both the justification of the priests of the Lord by the blood of Christ, and the sanctification of them by the Spirit, and the need that both their persons and their actions stand in of cleansing by them both:and he shall be hallowed, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him: all should be holy in a ceremonial sense, and devoted to holy uses and services; see Ps 45:8. Exodus 29:22Ver. 22. Also thou shalt take of the ram the fat and the rump,.... The fat which was upon it: the sheep in Arabia and about Judea were remarkable for their large tails; according to Rauwolff {z}, they were half a span thick, and one and a half broad, and very fat; and so in Africa and Egypt were rams of large tails often and twenty pounds weight {a}; and Aristotle {b} speaks of sheep in Syria that had tails a cubit broad; and Herodotus {c} makes mention of two sorts in Arabia, one sort have tails three cubits long, which if drawn upon the ground would ulcerate, wherefore the shepherds make little carts to bear them upon {d}, and the other sort have tails a cubit broad; and Vartomanus {e} relates, how in Arabia are fat sheep whose tails weigh eleven, twelve, seventeen, nay, forty four pounds, and of a cubit long:and the fat that covereth the inwards, and the caul of the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them:See Gill on "Ex 29:13"and the right shoulder; what was to be done with it is afterwards observed as well as with the rest:for it is a ram of consecration; or "of fillings" {f}; Jarchi says, the Scripture declares these fillings to be peace offerings, for they minister peace to the altar, and to him that does the service, and to the owners; wherefore the breast was necessarily his that did the service for his portion, and this was Moses, for he ministered in the fillings, and the

rest Aaron and his sons ate, for they were the owners. {z} Travels, p. 221. {a} Leo. African. Descript. Africae, l. 9. p. 753. {b} Hist. Animal. l. 8, c. 28. {c} Thalia sive, l. 3. c. 113. {d} The same is observed in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 54. 2. & Gloss. in. ib. {e} Navigat. l. 2. c. 5, 9, 15. {f} Myalm "impletionum", Montanus, Vatablus, Piscator. Exodus 29:23 Ver. 23. And one loaf of bread,.... Of unleavened bread, as in Ex 29:2 large bread is meant, as Ben Melech observes, for the rest were cakes and wafers, as follows:and one cake of oiled bread; which was made of flour and oil mixed and tempered together:and one wafer out of the basket of unleavened bread; which was anointed with oil and crossed, as the Jewish writers say:that [is] before the Lord; which basket of unleavened bread, cakes, and wafers, was set in the court of the tabernacle, and so said to be before the Lord, being devoted to whatever use he should assign them, being by his orders brought thither. Exodus 29:24 Ver. 24. And thou shalt put all in the hands of Aaron, and in the hands of his sons,.... Which accounts for the use of the phrase, filling the hand for consecration, Ex 29:9 for all the above things of the ram, bread, cakes, and wafers, were put into their hands when consecrated, denoting their investiture with their office: all things are in the hands of Christ, relative to the glory of God and the good of his people; their persons are in his hands, and all grace and blessings of it for them; a commission to execute his office as a priest is given to him; and as it was proper that he also should have somewhat to offer, his hands are filled, and he has a sufficiency for that purpose, as Aaron and his sons had, Heb 8:3 and shalt wave them for a wave offering before the Lord: which was waved or shook to and fro, from east to west, and from north to south, to or before him, as Jarchi observes, whose are the four winds of the world {g}; and this was done by Moses and Aaron also; for, according to the same writer, "both were employed in waving, both the owners and the priest, how? the priest put his hand under the hand of the owner and waved, and in this Aaron and his sons were the owners and Moses the priest." {g} Vid. T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 62. 1. Exodus 29:25 Ver. 25. And thou shalt receive them of their hands,.... After they had been put into them, and filled with them, and waved by them:and burn them upon the altar for a burnt offering; not the flesh of the ram, which is after ordered to be boiled and eaten by Aaron and his sons; but the fat of it, before described, with one loaf, one cake, and one wafer of unleavened bread, out of the basket: this was done for a sweet savour before the Lord; that it might be grateful and acceptable to him, as it was: it is an offering made by fire unto the Lord; See Gill on "Ex 29:18". Exodus 29:26 Ver. 26. And thou shalt take the breast of the ram of Aaron's consecrations,.... The ram being slain and cut to pieces, this part is particularly disposed of:and wave it for a wave offering before the Lord; in the manner before described:and it shall be thy part: the part of Moses, he officiating now as a priest; and we find accordingly in later times that this part of the sacrifice belonged to the priest, Le 7:31. Exodus 29:27 Ver. 27. And thou shalt sanctify the breast of the wave offering,.... Set it apart for the use of the priest in all succeeding ages:and the shoulder of the heave offering: as the breast was waved from one hand to

another, or cast from the hand of one to the hand of another; the shoulder was heaved up, or cast up and caught again: this also was to be sanctified or set apart for the priest's use, Le 7:32, which is waved, and which is heaved up of the ram of the consecration: the breast was waved and the shoulder heaved: even of that which is for Aaron, and of that which is for his sons; as these two parts before mentioned in peace offerings were. Exodus 29:28 Ver. 28. And it shall be Aaron's and his sons by a statute for ever from the children of Israel,.... That is, the shoulder, which seems particularly meant, though the breast also was theirs, which was at this time given to Moses, he being priest; and this was an everlasting statute and ordinance in all generations, as long as the priesthood of Aaron lasted, until the Messiah should come and put an end to it: and this the children of Israel were always to allow the priests; the shoulder, because Aaron bore their names before the Lord upon his shoulders, for a memorial; and the breast for a like reason, because he bore their names in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, and their judgment also before the Lord continually, Ex 28:12, for it is an heave offering: it is lifted up to the Lord, and therefore is given to his priest: and it shall be an heave offering from the children of Israel of the sacrifice of their peace offerings, [even] their heave offering unto the Lord: it being heaved up and given to the priest, it was reckoned an offering to the Lord, and was accepted by him as a peace offering; and it was an emblem of the lifting up of their hearts to God, and of the going up of the affections and desires of their souls to him, and of their serving and worshipping him in spirit and in truth, who is a spirit, and was their Father in heaven, to whom their eyes, hearts, and hands, were to be lifted up. Exodus 29:29 Ver. 29. And the holy garments of Aaron shall be his son's after him,.... That son that succeeded him in the priesthood; for the priesthood continued in Aaron's family by succession, the eldest son being high priest, until the disposal of this office fell into the hands of Heathen princes, and then it was obtained by interest or money: now, though the coat and breeches might be wore out by Aaron before he died, yet the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and its girdle, and the breastplate, might continue, and go from father to son, and especially the latter, even to succeeding ages; see Nu 20:26, to be anointed therein, and consecrated in them; this is to be understood only of the high priesthood, and of anointing and consecrating to that; for none but high priests were anointed, and their sons who succeeded them in that office, and who were anointed, and consecrated in like manner as Aaron was, by washing, clothing, anointing, and sacrificing. Exodus 29:30 Ver. 30. And that son that is priest in his stead,.... The Targum of Jonathan is, "who shall rise after him of his sons, not of the Levites;" for the high priest was to be of the family of Aaron, a descendant of his; it was not enough that he was of the tribe of Levi, but he must descend from Aaron, either in the line of Eleazar or of Ithamar: shall put them on seven days; the next successor was to wear the garments seven days running: when he cometh into the tabernacle of the congregation to minister in the holy place; to offer sacrifice in the court of the tabernacle, on the altar of burnt offering, and to offer incense on the altar of incense, and to trim the

lamps of the candlestick, and to put the shewbread on the table. Exodus 29:31 Ver. 31. And thou shalt take the ram of the consecration,.... For the other ram was cut in pieces and burnt, even the whole of it:and seethe his flesh in the holy place; not in that part of the tabernacle which was properly the holy place, as distinguished from the holy of holies, and from the court of the tabernacle; for in that there was no convenience for boiling, but in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation, even at the door of it, as in Le 8:31. Exodus 29:32 Ver. 32. And Aaron and his sons shall eat of the flesh of the ram,.... Typical of the flesh of Christ, whose flesh is meat indeed, and to be eaten by faith, whereby it becomes spiritual food, savoury and nourishing, as it is to all the Lord's priests, or who are made so to God:and the bread that is in the basket; the unleavened bread, cakes, and wafers, Ex 29:2, what was left of them, one loaf, one cake, and one wafer, having been put into the hands of Aaron and his sons, and received from them and burnt, Ex 29:23 this may figure Christ the bread of life, held forth in the ministry of the word, for believers in him to feed upon; which basket of bread was by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; the whole court, Jarchi says, was so called, where the people in common assembled, and the Lord met with them; and so may point at the public ordinances, where Christ is set forth as food for souls. Exodus 29:33 Ver. 33. And they shall eat those things wherewith the atonement was made,.... For the sins of Aaron and his sons, for they were men of infirmity, and needed sacrifice for sin themselves; and herein Christ their antitype excelled them, that he had no sin of his own, and needed not to offer first for them, and then for the sins of others, as Aaron and his sons, the types of him, did; and their eating of the sacrifice for atonement points at the receiving of the atonement of Christ's sacrifice by faith, and the enjoyment of it and the blessings following on it:to consecrate and to sanctify them; that they might be filled and fitted, and set apart and devoted to the office of the priesthood, and minister in it:but a stranger shall not eat [thereof], because they are holy; meaning not one of another nation, but of another family, though an Israelite; the Targum of Jonathan renders it, a profane and common person, a layman, one that was not a priest; who, though he was of the seed of Israel, yet not being of the seed of Aaron, as Aben Ezra interprets it, he might not eat of the above things, because they were devoted to holy uses; and therefore none but such who were sanctified or set apart to sacred service might partake of them. Exodus 29:34 Ver. 34. And if ought of the flesh of the consecrations, or of the bread, remain unto the morning,.... Being more than the priests could eat:then thou shalt burn the remainder with fire; that it might not be used in a contemptuous manner, or abused to superstitious uses; the same orders with those respecting what was left of the passover: Ex 12:10, it shall not be eaten, because it is holy; which is the reason before given why it should not be eaten by a stranger, and being kept till the next morning it was ordered to be burnt, that it might not then be eaten at all; it was not to be given to a stranger, nor to be cast to dogs, because it had been devoted to sacred uses; and it seems as if it was not to be eaten by the priests themselves the next day, who were to

live upon the daily provision made for them. Exodus 29:35 Ver. 35. And thus shall thou do unto Aaron, and to his sons,.... For their consecration, washing, clothing, anointing them, sprinkling blood upon them and their garments, and offering sacrifice for them: according to all things which I have commanded thee; no one thing was to be omitted, and we find they were carefully and punctually observed, Le 8:1 seven days shalt thou consecrate them: so long the rites and ceremonies of the consecration were to be performing, that they might be thoroughly used to the putting on of their garments, and the offering of sacrifices as they saw performed by Moses; and in all respects be fitted for the discharge of their office: the Jewish writers generally say that seven days were appointed, that a sabbath might pass over them. Exodus 29:36 Ver. 36. And thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin offering for atonement,.... That is, every day of the seven days of consecration; denoting the full and complete atonement for sin by the sacrifice of Christ, which these sacrifices could not really obtain, and were therefore frequently repeated, in this case seven times; figuratively by that number pointing to the full expiation of sin by the atoning Saviour, who was made not only an offering for sin, but sin itself by imputation, for his people: and thou shalt cleanse the altar when thou hast made atonement for it; which though not capable of sin, or of any moral guilt, yet, inasmuch as it was to be of sacred use, and to have sin offerings laid upon it, expiation and cleansing, in a ceremonial way, were to be made for it, to purge it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel, Le 16:18. This altar was typical of Christ, who is that altar believers in him have a right to partake of; and though he had no sin of his own, no guilt of that kind to expiate, nor pollution to be cleansed from, yet as he had the guilt of his people transferred to him, and was clothed with their filthy garments, and had their uncleanness on him; by the sacrifice of himself he purged away sin from himself and them, and was justified and cleared of all, and they in him: and thou shalt anoint it, to sanctify it; anoint it, as it afterwards was, with the holy anointing oil, whereby it was sanctified, or set apart for holy uses; in which it was a figure of Christ anointed with the oil of gladness, the Holy Spirit, above his fellows; and was sanctified and set apart for his priestly office, in which he was both altar, sacrifice, and priest. Exodus 29:37 Ver. 37. Seven days thou shalt make atonement for the altar, and sanctify it,.... That it might be thoroughly fit to have sacrifices offered on it: and it shall be an altar most holy; as Christ is, and is called the Most Holy, and said to be anointed, Da 9:24. He is holy in his person, nature, and offices, more holy than angels or men; as holy as the Lord God, the God of Israel, his Father, who is glorious in holiness, and none like to him for it: whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy; that is, whatsoever gift or sacrifice, according to law, was offered on it, whatever appertained unto it, or were suitable for it; for as for other things, they were not made holy by a touch of it, Hag 2:11. The Targum of Jonathan refers it to persons, paraphrasing the words, that such should be holy who were "of the sons of Aaron, but of the rest of the people it was not lawful for them to draw nigh, lest they should be burnt with flaming fire that comes out of the

holy things;"but our Lord applies it to gifts and offerings of the altar, for to this case he seems to have respect, Mt 23:19 for he is the altar that sanctifies not only the persons, but the services of his people, and their sacrifices of prayer and praise come up with acceptance to God from off this altar; though even the best duties and services of theirs need atonement and purification by the sacrifice and blood of Christ. Exodus 29:38 Ver. 38. Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar,.... An altar being ordered to be built, and this sanctified and expiated, and priests being appointed and consecrated to the service of it; an account is given of the offerings that should be offered up upon it every day, besides those that should be offered occasionally, and at other set times: two lambs of the first year day by day continually; typical of Christ the Lamb of God, who continually, through the efficacy of his blood, and the virtue of his sacrifice, which are ever the same, takes away day by day the sins of his people. A lamb is a proper emblem of him for innocence and harmlessness, for meekness and humility, for patience, for usefulness for food and clothing, and especially for sacrifice; and these being of the first year, may denote the tenderness of Christ, who as he grew up as a tender plant, so as a tender lamb, encompassed with infirmities, being in all things like unto his people, excepting sin; and as these were to be without spot, Nu 28:3 and so here, in the Septuagint version, it may point at the purity of Christ, who is the Lamb of God, without spot and blemish, and who offered himself without spot to God, and was a fit sacrifice to be offered up for the taking away of the sins of men. Exodus 29:39 Ver. 39. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning,.... And before this no other sacrifice was to be offered, and therefore it was slain and offered very early; and yet it was not lawful to slay it before break of day, wherefore great care was taken that it should not;"he that was appointed over the service used to say to the priests, go out, and see if the time of slaying is come; if it is come, he that went out to see, said, coruscations or brightnesses; Matthias the son of Samuel said, does it enlighten the face of the whole east as far as Hebron? he said, yes; why was this necessary? because one time the light of the moon ascended, and they thought the east was enlightened (or it was break of day), and they slew the sacrifice {h}:"and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, or between the two evenings; of which phrase See Gill on "Ex 12:6" Josephus {i} says, it was about the ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon, that the daily sacrifice was offered: the Misnic doctors say {k}, it was slain at eight and a half, or half an hour after two o'clock, and was offered up at nine and a half, or half an hour after three o'clock: they stayed as long as they could before they offered it, because no sacrifice was offered after it but the passover. We are told that the lamb of the morning was slain in the northwest corner of the altar, and that of the evening in the northeast corner {l}: the reason of this was, because in the morning the sun was in the east, and shone over against the west; but the evening daily sacrifice was when the sun was in the west, and shone opposite the east {m}: this was in a good measure literally fulfilled in Christ, namely, as to the time of slaying and offering the daily sacrifice; for he was crucified at the third hour, that is, at nine

o'clock in the morning, at the sixth hour, or at twelve o'clock at noon, darkness was upon the earth, which continued till the ninth, and then he gave up the ghost, which was three o'clock in the afternoon, the usual time of slaying and offering the daily evening sacrifice, Mr 15:25 and this may signify the extensiveness of Christ's sacrifice, reaching from the morning of the world to the evening of it. He was slain and offered up in the morning of the world, in the purpose and promise of God, in the typical sacrifices of men, and in the faith of his people, who looked to him as the atoning Saviour, and in the efficacy of his blood, which reached to all the saints from the beginning, for the pardon and atonement of their sins; and it was at the end or evening of the Jewish world and state that Christ was offered up a sacrifice for sin, and the virtue of it will continue to the end of the world. Christ is the Lamb of God that continues to take away the sin of the world, and his blood continues to cleanse from all sin, and he ever lives to make intercession for transgressors. Good men are continually sinning, and they ever stand in need of the application of pardoning grace and mercy; there are sins of the night, and the sins of the day they fall into, and nothing can expiate them but the blood and sacrifice of Christ. The repetition of these sacrifices every day, morning and night, shows that they could not really and perfectly take away sin; the cessation of them was a token of perfect atonement by Christ, which made them needless and useless: and this may teach us, that the sacrifices of prayer and praise should be morning and evening; in the morning we should express our thankfulness for the mercies of the night, and pray for the continuance of them the day following; and at the evening we should offer up the sacrifices of praise for the mercies of the day, and pray for the mercies of the night; and at both seasons should be concerned to have a fresh application of the atoning blood and sacrifice of Christ, for the taking away from us the sins of the night and day. {h} Misn. Yoma, c. 3. sect. 1, 2. Tamid, c. 3. sect. 2. {i} Joseph. Antiqu. l. 14. c. 4. sect. 3. {k} Misn. Pesachim, c. 5. sect. 1. {l} Misn. Tamid, c. 4. sect. 1. {m} Bartenora in Misn. Tamid, c. 4. sect. 1. Exodus 29:40 Ver. 40. And with the one lamb a tenth deal,.... That is, the tenth part of an "ephah", as Jarchi and Aben Ezra, which is an "omer", and held as much as a man could eat in one day, or more, see Ex 16:18:of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil; this was a meat, or, rather bread offering, which went along with the daily sacrifice, and typified Christ the food of his people, who is compared to a corn of wheat; is the finest of the wheat, and the bread of God, which came down from heaven, and gives life, food; and nourishment to men; and the "beaten oil" may signify the graces of the Spirit in him, and the exercise of them through the many trials and sufferings he endured, and which make him savoury food to his people, as a crucified Christ is:and the fourth part of a hin of wine for a drink offering; a "hin", Aben Ezra says, was an Egyptian measure, but what reason he had for it does not appear; according to Ainsworth, the fourth part of it was a pint and a half; but according to Bishop Cumberland {n}, who has with great exactness calculated the Jewish measures, it was a quart and above half a pint; this was poured out upon the

altar. Jarchi says there were two silver basins on the top of the altar, and there were bored in them like two small nostrils, and wine was put in the middle of them; and it flowed and went out by the way of the nostrils, and fell upon the top of the altar, and from thence descended to the bottom: this wine poured may either signify the blood of Christ shed, or poured out for the remission of sin; or the love of Christ very plentifully manifested in the offering up of himself for men, and the acceptableness of to God: and, moreover, as sacrifices are called the bread of God, and he makes as it were a feast of them, feeding on them with delight and pleasure, it was necessary there should be wine to complete the banquet; wherefore wine is said to cheer both God and man, Jud 9:13, alluding to the libations of wine in sacrifices. {n} Of Scripture Weights and Measures, c. 3. p. 86. Exodus 29:41 Ver. 41. And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even,.... See Gill on "Ex 29:39", and shall do thereto according to the meat offering of the morning, and according to the drink offering thereof; a meat and drink offering consisting of the same things, for quality and quantity, and made in the same manner, were to be offered with the daily evening sacrifice, as with the morning one: for a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the Lord: for these lambs were both burnt with fire upon the altar, and therefore are called a burnt offering in the next verse. Exodus 29:42 Ver. 42. This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations,.... To be offered up morning and evening in every age, as long as the Mosaic economy lasted, till he came, who put an end to it by offering up himself, the antitype of it: at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord; that is, upon the altar of burnt offering which stood there, see Ex 40:29: where I will meet you to speak there unto thee; to accept of their sacrifices, give further directions of what was to be done, and answers to inquiries made of him in matters of moment and difficulty. Jarchi observes, that some of their Rabbins conclude from hence, that the holy blessed God spoke with Moses from off the altar of brass, after the tabernacle was set up; but others say from off the mercy seat, as in Ex 25:22. Exodus 29:43 Ver. 43. And there will I meet with the children of Israel,.... Not only with Moses or with Aaron, and his successors, but with the people themselves, by granting them his gracious presence in public ordinances, giving them tokens of his goodwill unto them, and of his acceptance of their offerings, hearing their prayers put up by themselves, or by the priest interceding for them, and receiving their thanksgivings for mercies bestowed, and giving them instructions by the mouth of his priests: and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory; by his Shechinah, or the glory of the divine Majesty, dwelling in it; or it may be supplied, the children of Israel shall be sanctified; set apart and distinguished by his glorious presence among them; the Targum of Jonathan is, "I will be sanctified in or by their princes, because of my glory." Exodus 29:44 Ver. 44. And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar,.... This seems to intimate that something else in the preceding verse is intended, as what should be sanctified, than the tabernacle, as we supply it; or else here is a repetition of the same thing for the confirmation of it, and both that and the altar were, sanctified, or set

apart for holy uses, as well as cleansed and expiated by sacrifices: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest's office; that is, in a ceremonial way, by separating them from the rest of the children of Israel, by washing, clothing, and anointing them, and by accepting sacrifices offered by them; for this is not to be understood of internal sanctifying grace, which, though Aaron had, and many of his sons that succeeded him, yet not all; nor was it necessary to the performance of the priestly office, though it is in all those who are a royal priesthood, and made priests as well as kings unto God; for they are a holy nation, called with an holy calling, and unto himself, and have it both internally and externally. Exodus 29:45 Ver. 45. And I will dwell among the children of Israel,.... In the tabernacle ordered to be built for him, and which, when built, was placed in the midst of the camp of Israel; and here Jehovah dwelt as a king in his palace, near at hand to help, protect, and defend his subjects, and supply them with all things needful for them; see De 4:7 and will be their God; their covenant God, their King and their God, their government being a Theocracy; their God and Father, by national adoption, and from whom they might expect all good things, they continuing in obedience to his commands, by the tenure of which they held their rights and privileges, civil and ecclesiastical. Exodus 29:46 Ver. 46. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God,.... By his presence with them, by the blessings bestowed upon them, by his care of them, and kindness to them: that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell amongst them; not only did he bring them from thence, that they might dwell in the land of Canaan, but that he might dwell among them, which was by far the greatest mercy; and not only that they might be delivered from the bondage and affliction with which they were sorely pressed, but that they might be a free people, under the protection of their King and their God, in the midst of them; all which was a great encouragement to them, and an obligation on them to attend the service of the sanctuary, and to obey the Lord in whatsoever he had enjoined or should command them: I am the Lord their God; of which he had given full proof and evidence by what he had done for them, and would yet give more; and to have the Lord our God is the greatest happiness that can be enjoyed, see Ps 33:12.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 30:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 30

This chapter treats of the altar of incense, its form and use, [Ex 30:1](#) of the ransom of the Israelites, with the half shekel when numbered, [Ex 30:11](#) of the laver for the priests to wash their hands and feet at before service, [Ex 30:17](#) of the anointing oil, the ingredients of it, and what was to be done with it, [Ex 30:22](#), and of the perfume, the composition and use of it, [Ex 30:34](#).

Ver. 1. **And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon,**.... The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan call it incense of spices, properly enough, for it was made of various spices; of which see [Ex 30:34](#) and this was necessary on a natural and civil account, to remove those ill smells from the sanctuary, occasioned by the number of beasts continually slain in it; but chiefly on a religions account, to denote the acceptableness of the service of the sanctuary to God:

of shittim wood shall thou make it: of the same that the altar of burnt offering was made, which was covered with brass, but this with gold, as after related; of this sort of wood, See Gill on "Ex 25:5" as this altar was a type of Christ, the shittim wood may respect his human nature; which wood, though it sprung out of the earth, was not common, but choice and excellent, and very strong durable, and incorruptible; and so Christ, though he was man made of an earthly woman in his human nature, yet was chosen out of the people, is the chiefest among ten thousand, and excellent as the cedars, the man of God's right hand, whom he made strong for himself; and though he died in it, he saw no corruption, he now lives, and will live for evermore; in which nature he acts the part of a Mediator, and intercedes for his people, and offers up their prayers, perfumed with the much incense of his mediation, to which this altar has a special respect.

[Exodus 30:2](#)

Ver. 2. **A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, four square shall it be,**.... It was one Jewish square cubit, which is in surface, according to Bishop Cumberland, three English square feet, and about forty seven square inches; which may denote the solidity, perfection, and extensiveness of Christ's priesthood, it being unchangeable, firm, and lasting; and which passes not from one to another, and the

which makes something perfect, which the law and priesthood of Aaron could not, even perfects for ever them that are sanctified; and is very extensive; the virtue of it reaches to all the elect of God, from the beginning of the world to the end of it; not his sacrifice only, but his intercession, which is principally respected; that is made for all the people of God, in all places, and in all ages, and for all things for them, both for this life, and that which is to come:

and two cubits shall be the height thereof; so that it was as high again as it was long and broad: Christ, our interceding high priest, is made higher than the heavens:

the horns thereof shall be of the same; of the same wood the altar itself was made: these were a sort of spires that rose up at the four corners of the altar; and the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases the words,

"and of it its horns shall be erect;"

which were chiefly for decoration and ornament; and may denote the honour and glory of Christ, as well as his power and ability to save, to the uttermost, all that come to God by him, or lay hold upon him, since he ever lives to make intercession.

[Exodus 30:3](#)

Ver. 3. **And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold,**.... Hence this altar is sometimes called the golden altar, [Nu 4:11](#) this may figure the deity of Christ, whose head is as the most fine gold, and is in the divine nature, in the form of God, and is the brightness of his glory, and possessed of the same perfections; or rather the glorification of his human nature in heaven, where he is highly exalted, and the preciousness of his intercession, which is always powerful and prevalent, and the duration of it:

the top thereof, and the sides thereof, round about, and the horns thereof: all and each of them were covered with gold; this altar had a top, when the altar of burnt offering had none, but its hollow place was filled up with earth at every encampment; so Jarchi observes: this was not a grate, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it, for here were neither blood nor ashes to be let through; but it was a flat covering like the roof of a house, as the word signifies, on which was set a golden dish, with live coals and incense burning on them; and which, when burnt, was carried away: and the sides are the four sides of the frame, it being a square, or the two sides and two ends of it; and the horns, the four horns at each corner, all were covered with plates of gold; so that this altar was a richer and more excellent one than that of burnt offering; and may

signify the superior excellency of Christ's state of exaltation to that of his humiliation: in the latter, which the altar of burnt offering respected, he was made of no reputation, and became obedient to the death of the cross, yea, was made sin, and a curse for his people; but in the former, which the altar of incense respected, he was raised from the dead, and had glory given him; he was raised for the justification of his people, and was himself justified in the Spirit, ascended on high, was received into glory, sat down at the right hand of God, making continual intercession for his saints:

and thou shall make unto it a crown of gold round about; which was partly to keep from slipping what was put upon it, but chiefly for ornament; and plainly points at the exaltation of Christ in our nature in heaven, as our interceding high priest, where he is a priest upon his throne; and is crowned with glory and honour.

[Exodus 30:4](#)

Ver. 4. And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it,.... The crown was on the top of the altar, at the edge of it all around; and just underneath it were two rings of gold, two on each side:

by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shall thou make them; at each corner a ring, and at each side; the use of them follows:

and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal; these rings were for the staves to be put into when the altar was to be carried from place to place, as it was in the wilderness, during the travels of Israel there; and this signifies that Christ never leaves his people; when they are in the wilderness he is with them, interceding for them, providing all things necessary for their food, safety, and protection, [Re 12:14](#).

[Exodus 30:5](#)

Ver. 5. And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood,.... Of the same wood the altar itself was made:

and overlay them with gold; as that was; these rings and staves may be an emblem of the precious ordinances of Christ, in which he grants his presence; and where he is held forth in different ages and places as the interceding high priest of his people, their advocate with the Father, pleading continually his propitiatory sacrifice in their favour.

Exodus 30:6

Ver. 6. **Thou shalt put it before the veil**,.... That divides between the holy and the most holy place; not within the veil in the holy of holies, but before it at the holy place, for there the altar of incense stood: Josephus {o} says, between the candlestick and the table, i.e. of shewbread, stood the altar of incense; now the candlestick and shewbread were in the holy place; and with this account the Talmudists {p} agree, who say, that the table was in the north, distant from the wall two cubits and a half, and the candlestick on the south, distant from the wall two cubits and a half, and the altar was in the middle, and stood between them: and Maimonides {q} gives the like account of its situation, which is here further described:

that is by the ark of the testimony; which veil was by it, before which the altar was placed; the ark of the testimony was the chest or coffer in which the law was put, and which was the testimony of the will of God, from whence it had this name; and it stood in the most holy place; and not by it in the same place, but over against it, in the holy place stood the altar of incense:

before the mercy seat, that is over the testimony; the mercy seat that was over the ark, a lid or cover to it, where the testimony was; and towards this, before the face of it, was the altar of incense, where the priest officiating, looked directly towards it; having that in view for the acceptance of the people's prayers to God through Christ, which they were making while he was burning the incense:

where I will meet thee; as he had before promised, [Ex 25:22](#).

{o} Antiqu. 1. 3. c. 6. sect. 8. {p} T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 33. 2. {q} Hilchot Beth. Habechirah, c. 1. sect. 7.

Exodus 30:7

Ver. 7. **And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning**,.... This in later times was done by a common priest, who obtained this service by lots as we find in the times of Zacharias, [Lu 1:9](#) the incense was fetched out of the house of Abtines, where it was made, and burning coals were taken off of the altar of burnt offering in a vessel, and the incense was spread upon them and burnt: the Jewish canons about this matter run thus {r}; he that was worthy of, or allotted to, the incense, took a vessel that held three kabs, and a bowl in the midst of it, full and heaped up with incense, and took a silver censer, and went up to the top of the altar, and moved the coals to

and fro, and took them and went down and poured them into a golden censer: and again {s}, he that was worthy of, or allotted to, a censer, gathered the coals upon the top of the altar, and spread them with the edges of the censer, and bowing himself went out; and he that was worthy of, or allotted to, the incense, took the bowl out of the midst of the vessel, and gave it to his friend or neighbour: and he that burns the incense may not burn until the president says to him, burn; and if he was an high priest, the president says, lord high priest, burn; the people depart, and he burns the incense, and bows and goes away: the burning of the sweet incense was typical of the mediation and intercession of Christ; the burning coals typified his sufferings, which were painful to his body, and in which he endured the wrath of God in his soul, and both must be very distressing to him: the incense put upon these shows that Christ's mediation and intercession proceeds upon his sufferings and death, his bloodshed, satisfaction, and sacrifice; which mediation of his, like the sweet incense, is frequent, is pure and holy, though made for transgressors, and there is none like unto it; there is but one Mediator between God and man: likewise this was typical of the prayers of the saints; and at the same time that the incense was burnt the people were at prayer, which was set before the Lord as incense, see [Ps 141:3](#), these go upwards to God, and come up with acceptance to him, from off the golden altar, being offered up to him by Christ, with his much incense, through his blood and righteousness, and are pure, holy, fervent, and fragrant, and called odours, [Re 5:8](#)

when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it; which he did every morning he went into the holy place, where the candlestick with its lamps was; these he trimmed and dressed, snuffed those that were ready to go out, lighted those that were gone out, supplied them with oil and wicks, and cleared the snuff dishes, and the like: now near to the candlestick stood the altar of incense, so that when the priest looked after the one, he did the service of the other; and hence we learn, that our intercessor and lamplighter is one and the same; he that was seen amidst the golden candlesticks dressing the lamps of them, appears at the golden altar with a golden censer, to offer up the prayers of his saints, [Re 1:13](#) and we learn also, that the light of the word and prayer should go together, as they do in faithful ministers and conscientious Christians, who give themselves up unto and employ themselves therein; the one to and in the ministry of the word and prayer, and the other to and in the reading and hearing of the word and prayer.

{r} Misn. Tamid, c. 5. sect. 4, 5. {s} Ibid. c. 6. sect. 2, 3.

[Exodus 30:8](#)

Ver. 8. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it,....

In the evening the priest went into the holy place to light the lamps that were gone out, See Gill on "Ex 27:20" at the same time he burnt incense on the altar; and as the daily sacrifice was offered up morning and evening, so the incense was burnt every morning and evening, and much about the same time: the Jews say {t}, that the incense of the morning was offered between the blood (i.e. the sprinkling of the blood of the daily sacrifice) and the members, or the laying of the pieces on the altar; and the incense of the evening was between the pieces and the drink offering: and with this Philo agrees {u}, who says, twice every day most fragrant odours were offered, at the sun rising and setting, before the morning and after the evening sacrifice:

a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations; thus Christ's mediation and intercession is constant and continual; as his sacrifice continually takes away the sin of the world, in which it was the antitype of the daily sacrifice; so his blood continually speaks for peace and pardon, and every blessing of grace for his people, in which it is the antitype of the morning and evening incense; for he ever lives to make intercession; and so the prayers of the saints are directed to God both morning and evening, and they cease not praying as long as they live.

{t} Misn. Yoma, c. 3. sect. 4. {u} De Victimis, p. 836.

Exodus 30:9

Ver. 9. Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon,.... Which had not the same, but was made of other materials, or had more or fewer; whatever was not exactly the same was not to be offered; and so to make use of other mediators than Christ, whether angels or men, or to put up prayer to God for the sake of our own righteousness, pleading the merits of our works, and not the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, is to offer strange incense, unacceptable to God, and which will be of no avail to men:

nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; these were to be offered and burnt upon the altar of burnt offering;

neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon; as upon the other altar; everything in God's worship and service was to be done in the proper place and order; these offerings and sacrifices, though they were by divine appointment, yet must be offered on that altar which was peculiar for them.

Exodus 30:10

Ver. 10. **And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year,....** On the day of atonement, as the Targum of Jonathan, and so Jarchi and Aben Ezra explain it; and the atonement here referred to seems to be an atonement for the altar itself, see [Le 16:18](#) and as the altar of burnt offering was first expiated and then used, [Ex 29:36](#) so it seems the altar of incense had not only an atonement made on it, but for it: and this was done

with the blood of the sin offering of atonement; by sprinkling the blood of that offering upon the horns of it, as we learn from the afore mentioned place; and this shows that Christ's mediation and intercession is founded upon the virtue of his blood, and the efficacy of his atoning sacrifice, see [1Jo 2:1](#)

once in the year shall he make atonement upon it, throughout your generations; which proves the insufficiency of all legal sacrifices of themselves to take away sin, since every year, as the apostle observes, there was a remembrance of it, [Heb 10:3](#)

it is most holy unto the Lord; either the atonement made on the day of atonement, which was a most holy part of service, and pointed at the great atonement made by the most Holy One, the Son of God; or this altar thus expiated, and devoted to sacred use, was reckoned a most sacred one to the Lord, and so was to have nothing offered upon it but what he ordered; with which Jarchi agrees in his note,

"the altar is sanctified to these things only, and not to any other service."

[Exodus 30:11](#)

Ver. 11. **And the Lord spake unto Moses,....** Continued his discourse; or, there being some intermission, reassumed it:

saying; as follows.

[Exodus 30:12](#)

Ver. 12. **When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel, after their number,....** An account of them, how many they are; which was sometimes done, and was proper to be done, especially in time of war; though the present case seems to be for the sake of raising money for the tabernacle and the service of it:

then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, when thou

numberest them; which was not done yearly, nor was it perpetual; we have but two instances of it after this until the times of David, [Nu 1:2](#) yet it seems to have been a yearly tax or tribute, in the times of Christ, See Gill on "Mt 17:24" see Gill on "Mt 21:12"; and in the Misnah is a whole treatise called "Shekalim", in which an account is given of the time and manner of collecting this ransom money, and for what uses, and who were obliged to pay it, and who not; on the first of Adar (or February) they proclaimed concerning the payment of it, on the fifteenth the tables were set for that purpose, and on the twenty fifth the proper persons sat in the sanctuary to receive it {w}: this was typical of the ransom of souls by Christ, who are not all the world, for they are ransomed out of it, but Israelites, the whole mystical Israel of God, and are a numbered people; their names are written in the book of life, they are told into the hands of Christ, are exactly known by God and Christ; and these are many and even numberless to men:

that there be no plague amongst them when thou numberest them; as there was when David numbered them; which some have thought was owing to the non-payment of the ransom money after mentioned; the Septuagint version is, "no fall", the ransom of souls by Christ preserves them from a total and final fall by sin into everlasting ruin and destruction; or, "no death" as the Targum of Onkelos, for redemption by Christ secures from the second death, and even from a corporeal death as a penal evil.

{w} Misn. Shekalim, c. 1. sect. 1, 3.

[Exodus 30:13](#)

Ver. 13. **This they shall give, everyone that passeth among them that are numbered,....** And their number, according to Jarchi, was known by what was paid; for he says the sum was taken not by heads, but everyone gave the half shekel, and by counting them the number was known, as follows:

half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary; that is, after the standard of a shekel kept in the sanctuary as a rule for all; and so Jarchi paraphrases it,

"according to the weight of a shekel, which I have fixed for thee to weigh, the shekel of the sanctuary."

It was about fourteen pence: a shekel is twenty gerahs; a gerah being the twentieth part of a shekel, it was not quite three halfpence of our money:

an half shekel [shall be] the offering of the Lord; which was to be offered to him for

the ransom of souls, whose lives were forfeited by sin; and of the redemption of which this was an acknowledgment; and was typical of the ransom price of souls by Christ, which is not silver or gold, but his precious blood, his life, himself, which is given as an offering and sacrifice to God, in the room and stead of his people; and which is given to God, against whom sin is committed, the lawgiver, whose law is broken, the Judge, whose justice must be satisfied, and the creditor, to whom the price must be paid.

Exodus 30:14

Ver. 14. Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above,.... Even Levites, Israelites, proselytes, and servants freed, but not women, bond servants, or children {x}:

shall give an offering to the Lord; the half shekel before mentioned.

{x} Misn. Shekalim, c. 1. sect. 1, 3.

Exodus 30:15

Ver. 15. The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel,.... Which shows that the Israelites were alike in the esteem of God, their worldly circumstances making no difference; their souls being alike, the same ransom price was given for them; and that they were all to have an equal share in the service and sanctuary of God, and the price was set so low, that the poorest man might be able to pay it: and even Maimonides {y} says, if he lived on alms, he was to beg it of others, or sell his clothes from off his back to pay it. This shows the equality of the redeemed and ransomed of the Lord; for though some sins and sinners are greater than others, and some are redeemed from more sins than others, yet all sins being infinite, as committed against an infinite God, but one price is paid for all, and that is the precious blood of Christ, the Son of God, an infinite and divine Person; hence all the ransomed ones have the same faith, righteousness, salvation, and eternal life:

when they give an offering unto the Lord, to make atonement for your souls; which have sinned, are liable to death for it, are the more excellent part of men, and require a great price for the redemption and ransom of them; and hence it is so great a blessing to be ransomed, because it is the ransom of the soul: and such is the efficacy of Christ's ransom, that it is a full atonement for the souls of men, and their sins, and completely delivers from sin, Satan, the law, death, and hell.

{y} Hilchot Shekalim, c. 1. sect. 1.

Exodus 30:16

Ver. 16. **And thou shall take the atonement money of the children of Israel,**.... The half shekel, the ransom of their souls:

and shall appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; for the building of the tabernacle, for the repairs of it, and for the sacrifices offered in it; particularly we find that this first collection this way was appropriated to the silver sockets of the sanctuary, and the vail, for the silver hooks, and for the pillars, [Ex 38:27](#):

that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls; to put them in mind that they were sinners, that their lives were forfeited, that a ransom price was given and accepted of God, that hereby atonement, in a typical sense, was made for them; and this was before the Lord, as a token of their gratitude to him, and of their acknowledgment of the favour.

Exodus 30:17

Ver. 17. **And the Lord spake unto Moses,**.... Again, at another time, and upon another subject:

saying, as follows.

Exodus 30:18

Ver. 18. **Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash [withal],**.... For Aaron, and his sons, and the priests in succession, to wash at before their entrance on their ministry; and denotes in general the necessity of purity, in order to minister in the priestly office; and which was in its perfection in Christ, who being holy and harmless, was an high priest becoming us, and suitable to us, qualified to offer himself without spot to God, and to take away sin; of which purity his baptism in water might be a symbol, which he submitted to before he entered publicly on the execution of his office as a prophet and priest; and as this may respect the ministers of the Gospel, it shows that they should be pure and holy in their lives and conversations,

and be examples in purity of conversation to others: and as this may chiefly respect all the saints who are priests unto God; it may be either typical of the laver of regeneration, in which grace, comparable to water, is given, and in which a clean heart is created; and which has an influence on purity of life and conversation, and secures from death: or rather of the blood of Christ, the laver and fountain to wash in for sin and uncleanness; which is large and capacious for all the priests of the Lord, and stands open and uncovered for all to come unto; and as this was made of brass, and that brass the looking glasses of the women, [Ex 38:8](#) as it may respect the laver of regeneration, may denote the durability of that grace, which is an immortal seed, a well of living water, springing up to everlasting life, and was a clear evidence of election of God, and redemption by Christ; and as it may be an emblem of the blood of Christ, it signifies the duration and continued virtue of that blood to cleanse from all sin; and that such who are washed in it, and cleansed by it, are not only beheld as clean and pure by the Lord, but in their own sight also, God having caused their iniquities to pass from them, and justified them from them by his blood:

and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar; that is, the altar of burnt offering, which was by the door of the tabernacle; and between that and the tabernacle or tent of the congregation stood the laver for the priests to wash in, just as they entered into the tabernacle, [Ex 40:29](#) it stood inclining to one of the sides, as Aben Ezra says; a little on the south side, as Jarchi observes: and thou shalt put water therein; or order it to be put in for the use next mentioned. Exodus 30:19 Ver. 19. For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat. Not in it, but at it; the laver had mouths or spouts, as Ben Melech says, from whence the water flowed when the priests washed their hands and feet at it; and so Bartenora says {z} they did not wash out of the laver, but from water flowing out of it; it is said "out of it", not in it; it seems at first there were but two of these spouts; for it is said {a} Ben Katin made twelve spouts or cocks, which had but two before; so that twelve priests could wash their hands and feet at one time, and which they could do at once, presently, by putting the right hand on the top of the right foot, and the left hand upon the left foot, as both Jarchi and Ben Melech relate: and now the hands being the instruments of action, and the feet of walking, this shows that the actions of good men, the priests of the Lord, and their walk and conversation, are not without sin, and that these need washing in the laver of Christ's blood, to which there must be daily application, see Zec 13:1. Our Lord seems to have reference to this ceremony, Joh 13:10 the Egyptian priests washed twice every day in cold water, and twice every night {b}. {z} In Misn. Zebachim, c. 2. sect. 1. {a} Misn. Yoma. c. 3. sect. 10. {b} Herodot. Euterpe, sive, l. 2. c. 37. Exodus 30:20 Ver. 20. When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water,.... The laver standing near the door of the tabernacle, they washed at it as soon as they entered; and no man, we are told {c}, entered into the court before he washed, even though he was clean;

though he had contracted no filthiness, and even though he had washed his hands and feet at home, he was obliged to do it when he went into the tabernacle, before he attempted to perform any service. This intimates to us the necessity as of pure hearts, so of pure hands, in order to compass the altar of God, to attend public worship, and particularly prayer, in which holy hands should be lifted up, 1Ti 2:8:that they die not: sin exposes to death, eternal death; that is the wages of it, and it is only the blood of Christ, and being washed in that, that can secure from it:or when they come near to the altar to minister; to the altar of burnt offering to minister there, by laying on the wood and the pieces in order, and burning them on it, as follows:to burn offering made by fire to the Lord; no man was fit for this service, or might be admitted to it, until he was washed; and it was usual among other nations to wash before they entered on religious service {d}; even in the East Indies, the priests do not sacrifice to their idols before they wash in water that is about the temple {e}; which seems to be a satanical imitation of this practice among the Jews. {c} Misn. Yoma, c. 3. sect. 3. {d} Vid. Outram de Sacrificiis, l. 1. c. 6. sect. 14. {e} Vartoman. Navigat. l. 5. c. 23. Exodus 30:21Ver. 21. So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not,... By the immediate hand of God, who would so greatly resent such a neglect of his command; and by how much easier it was to perform it, by so much the more were they inexcusable, and to be treated with greater severity; and this is repeated, that they might carefully observe it, lest they perish:and it shall be a statute for ever to them, [even] to him and to his seed, throughout their generations; to be observed by Aaron and his descendants in all ages, as long as their priesthood lasted, until the Messiah should come, and wash all his people, his priests, with his own blood, from all their sins, Re 1:5. Exodus 30:22Ver. 22. Moreover, the Lord spake unto Moses,... Some little time afterwards, while he was yet with him on the mount:saying; as follows. Exodus 30:23Ver. 23. Take thou also unto thee principal spices,... To make the anointing oil with, and are as follow:of pure myrrh five hundred shekels; it is strange that Saadiah, and so Maimonides {f}, should take this for musk, which comes from a beast, and is confuted by Aben Ezra from So 5:1 from whence it plainly appears to be what comes from a tree; and the word "mor", here used, gives the tree the name of myrrh almost in all languages. And it is justly mentioned first among the chief of spices; since, as Pliny {g} says, none is preferred unto the stacte or liquor that flows from it, that which is pure myrrh, unmixed, unadulterated; or "myrrh of freedom" {h}, which flows freely, either of itself, or, when cut, which is the best; and this was fitly used as a principal ingredient in the anointing oil, since oil was made out of it itself, called oil of myrrh, Es 2:12 and as a shekel is generally supposed to weigh half an ounce, the quantity of this to be taken was two hundred and fifty ounces:and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even two hundred and fifty [shekels]; or one hundred twenty five ounces: it is here called sweet cinnamon, to distinguish it from that which was not sweet; so Jarchi observes,"there is one sort that has a good smell and taste, another that has not, but is as wood (common wood), therefore it was necessary to say sweet

cinnamon."So Pliny {i} speaks of two sorts of it, one whiter, and another blacker; sometimes the white is preferred, and sometimes the black is commended. The cinnamon tree grows in great plenty in the island of Zeilon in India (Ceylon or called Srilanka today, Editor), as Vartomanus {k} relates, who says it is not much unlike a bay tree, especially the leaves; it beareth berries as does the bay tree, but less and white; it is doubtless no other than the bark of a tree, and gathered in this manner; every third year they cut the branches of the tree--when it is first gathered it is not yet so sweet, but a month after, when it waxeth dry; and with this Pliny {l} agrees, who says it is not odorous while it is green. Pancirollus {m} reckons cinnamon among the things that are lost; and says, that we have no knowledge of the true cinnamon; and reports from Galen, that in his time it was so scarce, that it was rarely found but in the cabinets of emperors. Pliny {n} makes mention of it, as used in ointments:and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty [shekels]; or one hundred and twenty five ounces; and this is called sweet, because there is a calamus that is not sweet, as Jarchi; this is the same with the sweet cane from a far country, Jer 6:20 from India, as is generally thought; but rather perhaps from Sheba, or some part of Arabia; it must be nearer at hand than India, from whence the Israelites had these spices; and Moses is bid to take them, as if they were near indeed; and Pliny speaks of myrrh, and of sweet calamus, as growing in many places of Arabia, and of cinnamon in Syria {o}; and Dionysius Periegetes {p} mentions calamus along with frankincense, myrrh, and cassia, and calls it sweet smelling calamus; and so Strabo {q} speaks of cassia and cinnamon as in Arabia Felix; and Diodorus Siculus {r} makes mention of all these in Arabia, and of cassia that follows. {f} Cele Hamikdash, c. 1. sect. 3. {g} Nat. Hist. l. 12, 15. {h} rwrdr "myrrhae libertatis", Montanus, Vatablus; "myrrhae sponte fluentis", Tigurine version. {i} Ibid. c. 19. {k} Navigat. l. 6. c. 4. {l} Ut supra. (Nat. Hist. l. 12, 15.) {m} Rer. Memorab. sive Deperd. par. 1. tit. 9. p. 28. {n} Ib. l. 15. c. 7. {o} Nat. Hist. l. 12. c. 15, 22, 28. {p} Orb. Descript. l. 937. {q} Geograph. l. 16. p. 538. {r} Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 132. Exodus 30:24Ver. 24. And of cassia five hundred [shekels],.... Or two hundred and fifty ounces:after the shekel of the sanctuary; according to the standard weight kept there. This "cassia" was not the "cassia solutiva", which is of a purgative nature, and now in use in physic, but the "cassia odorata", or the sweet smelling "cassia": which, Pancirollus {s} says, some take to be the nard, out of which a most sweet oil is pressed; and Servius {t} says, that cassia is an herb of a most sweet smell. Pliny {u} speaks of it along with cinnamon; and Galen says, when cinnamon was wanting, it was usual to put in its stead a double quantity of cassia {w}; Leo Africanus speaks of trees in Africa bearing cassia, and which chiefly grew in Egypt {x};and of oil olive an hin; containing twelve logs: according to Godwin {y}, it was of our measure three quarts; but, as Bishop Cumberland has more exactly calculated it, it held a wine gallon, a quart, and a little more: this was the purest and best of oil, and most fit and proper to be a part of this holy anointing oil. {s} Ut supra, (Rer. Memorab. sive Deperd. par. 1.) tit. 11. p. 30. {t} In Virgil.

Bucol. Eclog. 2. {u} Ut supra, (Nat. Hist. l. 12.) c. 19. {w} Apud Dalechamp in Plin. ib. {x} Descriptio Africae, l. 9. p. 752. {y} Moses & Aaron, l. 6. c. 9. Exodus 30:25 Ver. 25. And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment,.... All the above spices and oil being put together, an ointment was to be made out of them, not thick, as ointments usually are, but a liquid to be poured, and therefore called an "oil of ointment", and "holy", because devoted only to sacred uses: an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary: or confectioner; the spices bruised, and pounded, and mixed together, and boiled or distilled, and so an oil or ointment extracted from them: it shall be an holy anointing oil; for the uses next mentioned: it signified the Holy Spirit of God, and his graces, that oil of gladness with which Christ and his people are anointed; and is that anointing which teacheth all things, see Ps 45:7 1Jo 2:20 comparable to these several spices, and oil olive, for their sweet smell, cheering and reviving nature, and supplying quality, and for their valuableness and preciousness, and of which there was a certain weight and measure; for though Christ received this unction without measure, yet there is a certain measure of grace and gifts bestowed upon his people, and by which they are made holy and fit for their master's use. Exodus 30:26 Ver. 26. And thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith,.... It cannot be thought the whole of it should be anointed all over, but only a part of it for the whole; and this was either typical of the human nature of Christ, the true tabernacle God pitched, and not man, and which was anointed with the Holy Ghost; or of the church and people of God, who are an holy tabernacle or temple of the Lord, and who receive the unction from the Holy One: and the ark of the testimony; the chest where the law was, and stood in the most holy place of the tabernacle; and was a type of the Messiah, the anointed One, in whose heart the law was, and who is the fulfilling end of it for righteousness. Exodus 30:27 Ver. 27. And the table, and all his vessels,.... The shewbread table, with all things appertaining to it, rings, staves, dishes, spoons, bowls, &c. all were anointed; which had respect to Christ, and the communion of his people with him, feeding on him, that food which endures for ever, whom God the Father has sealed and sanctified: and the candlestick and his vessels; an emblem of the church, and of the light of the word held forth in it, which being accompanied with the grace of the Spirit of God, is the savour of life unto life: and the altar of incense; on which the odours, the prayers of the saints, come up before God through the mediation of Christ. Exodus 30:28 Ver. 28. And the altar of burnt offering, with all its vessels,.... Pans, shovels, basins, &c. and this altar particularly was sprinkled with it seven times, Le 8:10: and the laver, and his foot; the laver of brass for the priests to wash their hands and feet in, and the foot or base of it on which it stood, see Ex 30:18. Exodus 30:29 Ver. 29. And thou shalt sanctify them, that they may be most holy,.... By anointing them, and so be set apart for sacred uses only; as by the grace of the Holy Spirit, the people of God, the vessels of mercy, are really sanctified, and made meet for the master's use; and therefore it is called the sanctification of the Spirit, which is true holiness, in opposition to typical or

ceremonial holiness, here intended; and if this holy anointing oil made those things most holy that were anointed with it, how much more must the grace of the Spirit those who partake of it; and though it is at present imperfect, it will be perfected, and become complete holiness, without which no man can see the Lord: whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy; as is said of the most holy altar, See Gill on "Ex 29:37". The Targum of Jonathan interprets it of persons that approach these holy places, and things so anointed and sanctified, paraphrasing the words thus; "whosoever cometh unto them of the priests shall be holy, but of the rest of the tribes shall be burnt with flaming fire before the Lord." Exodus 30:30 Ver. 30. And thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons,.... Them alone, and not others, as Aben Ezra, who were typical of Christ anointed with the Spirit of God without measure, to his various offices of prophet, priest and King; and also of all the saints, who are anointed priests to God, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Christ: and consecrate them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office; by anointing them, and by other rites mentioned in the preceding chapter; whereby they were set apart for that office, and were qualified for it, and had authority to exercise it. Exodus 30:31 Ver. 31. And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel,.... When he was come down from the mount, and gave the instructions about the making and using of this oil: saying, this shall be an holy anointing oil unto me throughout your generations; Abarbinel, and other Jewish writers, conclude from hence, that this same oil, which was made by Moses, lasted throughout the generations to the times of Josiah, when it was hid with other things; but this, notion is justly exploded by Aben Ezra; it is not probable, that so small a quantity that was now made, which is supposed by some to be no more than a gallon and a half of wine measure, should suffice so long: it does not seem to be more than what was sufficient for present use; for the anointing of so many persons, and things as were anointed, and much less to be sufficient for the anointing of priests and kings in after times, until that period. This cannot be supposed without a miraculous interposition, to which the Talmudists {z} fly, and observe, that there were many miracles in this affair; but there is no need to have recourse to them, since, for aught that is said, it might be made again in like manner for sacred uses, which is meant by the phrase "unto me"; though it might not be made for any other use, private or profane. {z} Massachet Cerithot, fol. 5. 2. & Horayot, fol. 11. 2. Exodus 30:32 Ver. 32. Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured,.... That is, not upon common men, or on men's flesh in common, as was usual at feasts and entertainments in the eastern countries, see Ps 23:5 but this was not to be used on such occasions, otherwise it was poured on the flesh of some men, as Aaron and his sons, on whose head it was poured and ran down to the beard: neither shall ye make [any other] like it, after the composition of it; for private uses: it [is] holy, [and] it shall be holy unto you; it was set apart for sacred use by the Lord, and so it was to be reckoned by them, and not to be used in any way, or for any other purpose than he had directed: all which shows, that the grace of the Spirit belongs to the Lord's people, his priests; other men are

carnal, and have no lot or part in this matter, and are not to be admitted to holy ordinances, as if they were holy persons; nor is fellowship in holy things to be allowed them; nor is counterfeit grace of any avail, which, though it may bear a likeness to true grace, is not that, nor to be so accounted, nor rested on, as feigned faith, the hypocrite's hope, dissembled love, and pretended humility. Exodus 30:33 Ver. 33. Whosoever compoundeth any like it,.... For his own use, or for any other than what God appointed it for: or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger; meaning not a Gentile, an alien from the commonwealth of Israel; though Japhet interprets it of such a stranger who was not of the children of Israel; this Aben Ezra says is not right, but he says it means one that is not of the seed of Aaron; and so the Targum of Jonathan, "upon a profane person (or a common person, a laic) that is not of the sons of Aaron:" though the kings of Israel seem to be an exception to this, which might be by a special order from the Lord; yet it is a question whether it was with this, or with common oil, that they were anointed: indeed, the oil with which Solomon was anointed was taken out of the tabernacle, 1Ki 1:39 shall even be cut off from his people; either by death, by the immediate hand of God inflicting some disease upon him, or by excommunication from the congregation of Israel, or by not favouring him with any posterity, to keep up his name in the nation. Exodus 30:34 Ver. 34. And the Lord said unto Moses,.... In a continued discourse, or some time after the former, though more probably at the same time; since it concerns the incense to be offered on the altar of incense, about which directions are given in the former part of the chapter: take unto thee sweet spices: which are as follow, "stacte", "onycha", and "galbanum"; the former of these has its name from dropping; and of the same signification is the Hebrew word "Nataph", here used. Pancirollus says {a}, myrrh is a drop or tear distilling from a tree in Arabia Felix; and stacte is a drop of myrrh, which is extracted from it, and yields a most precious liquor: and so Pliny {b} relates, that myrrh trees sweat out of their own accord, before they are cut, what is called stacte, to which nothing is preferable: though some naturalists, as Theophrastus and Dioscorides {c} speak of this as flowing from it when it is cut; however, all agree it is a liquor that drops from myrrh; though the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem interpret it "balsam" or "rosin"; as does Jarchi on the place, and Maimonides {d}: the second of these, "onycha", has its name from being of the colour of a man's nail, as the onyx stone is, and is the same with the "unguis odorata" or "blatta byzantia". Jarchi says it is the root of a spice, smooth and shining like a man's nail. It is by some understood of "laudanum" or "balellium"; but the greatest part of commentators explain it by the "onyx", or the odoriferous shell, which is a shell like to that of the shell fish called "purpura": the onyx is fished for in watery places of the Indies, where grows the "spica nardi", which is the food of this fish, and what makes its shell so aromatic: they go to gather these shells when the heat has dried up the marshes. The best onyx is found in the Red sea, and is white and large, the Babylonian is black and smaller; this is what Dioscorides says of it {e}. "And the best being found in the Red

sea, it may be reasonably supposed it was what Moses was bid to take. In all India, it is the principal thing in all perfumes, as the aloe is in pills {f}; the Targum of Jonathan interprets it by "costus"; and the Jerusalem Targum by spike of myrrh, meaning perhaps spikenard. The last of these, "galbanum", what now goes by that name, is of a very ill smell, and therefore cannot be thought to be one of these sweet spices; but another is meant, and which, by its name "Chelbanah", was of a fat and unctuous nature; though Jarchi says, galbanum, whose smell is ill, is put among the spices; and Maimonides {g} and Kimchi {h} describe it like black honey, and of an offensive smell; but it must be something odoriferous, and therefore most likely to be the galbanum Pliny {i} speaks of as growing on Mount Arianus in Syria, which he mentions along with several sorts of balsams, and as a sort of frankincense; and the Vulgate Latin version, to distinguish it, calls it "galbanum" of a "good smell":[these] sweet spices with pure frankincense; for which Sabaea in Arabia Felix was very famous, and was called the thuriferous country, as Pliny {k} says; who observes that there were in it two times of gathering the frankincense, the one in autumn, that which was white, and the purest, the other in the spring, which was reddish, and not to be compared with the former:of each shall there be a like weight; just as much of one as of the other: in the Hebrew text it is, "alone by alone"; and the sense may be, that each spice was beaten alone, and after that mixed, as Aben Ezra, or weighed alone, and then put together. {a} Rer. Memorab. & Deperd. par. 1. tit. 12. p. 32. {b} Nat. Hist. l. 12. c. 15. {c} Apud Dalechamp. in Plin. ib. {d} Cele Hamikdash, c. 2. sect. 4. {e} Calmet's Dictionary on the word "Onycha". {f} Vid. Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 2. p. 243. {g} Cele Hamikdash, c. 2. sect. 4. {h} Sepher Shorash. Rad. blx. {i} Nat. Hist. l. 12. c. 15. {k} Ib. c. 14. Exodus 30:35Ver. 35. And thou shalt make it a perfume,.... By mixing the above spices together:a confection after the art of the apothecary; in the manner they beat, compound, and mix several ingredients together:tempered together; or "salted" {l}, with salt of Sodom, as Aben Ezra interprets it; and Maimonides {m} says, there was a fourth part of a kab of salt of Sodom put into it: and whether this incense or perfume respects the intercession of Christ or the prayers of his people, they are both savoury and acceptable to God, the latter on account of the former; in all sacrifices salt was used, and every spiritual sacrifice of ours should be seasoned with grace:pure and holy; such should be the prayers of the saints, and such most certainly is the mediation of Christ, which is his much incense. {l} xlmm "salitum", Montanus, Drusius. Junius & Tremellius, & Piscator. {m} Cele Hamikdash, c. 2. sect. 3. Exodus 30:36Ver. 36. And thou shall beat some of it very small,.... Or every one of the spices; for this does not seem to respect any different usage of some part of the incense from the rest; but it was all to be beat very small, that it might mix together the better, and be easier spread upon the coals, and the smoke thereof go up the sooner:and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation; that is, upon the altar of incense, which was placed there, Ex 30:6 and here it was to be put in order to be burnt, not to be kept, either to be looked at, or smelled to:where I will meet with thee;

See Gill on "Ex 30:6"it shall be unto you most holy; reckoned by them most sacred, and not to be put to any private or profane uses. Exodus 30:37Ver. 37. And [as] for the perfume which thou shalt make,.... As above directed:ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof; that is, for their own use, for the scenting of their rooms, or to snuff up, or smell to, as in the next verse:it shall be unto thee holy for the Lord; separated entirely for his service, to be burned upon his altar, and to be no otherwise used. Exodus 30:38Ver. 38. Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto,.... A man might make a perfume of the same ingredients, and of the same weight, and exactly like it, but not to burn for his own delight and pleasure; but if he made it and sold it to the congregation, as Jarchi observes, he was not guilty; but if it was for his own private use and pleasure, then heshall even be cut off from his people; See Gill on "Ex 30:33".

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 31:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 31

In this chapter an account is given of the persons whom God had chosen, and qualified for the work of building the tabernacle, and all things relating to it, and for the direction and oversight thereof,

[Ex 31:1](#) and an enumeration is made of the several things that were to be wrought, some in one way, some in another, [Ex 31:7](#) the law of the sabbath is repeated, and the violation of it made death,

[Ex 31:12](#) and the chapter is concluded with observing, that at the close of the above orders, two tables of stone, with the law written upon them by the finger of God, were given to Moses,

[Ex 31:18](#).

Ver. 1. **And the Lord spake unto Moses**,.... After the Lord had given Moses instructions about building a tabernacle, the model of which he had shown him, and what should be the furniture of it, who should minister in it, and what clothes they should wear, he acquaints him that he had provided artificers for this service; which would prevent doubts and objections that might rise up in the mind of Moses, how and by whom all this should be done; since the children of Israel had not been brought up, nor used to any curious work in Egypt, out of which they were but just come:

saying; as follows:

[Exodus 31:2](#)

Ver. 2. **See, I have called by name Bezaleel**,.... Had pitched upon, chosen, and distinguished him particularly from all other men to be the architect or chief master builder of the tabernacle, and to be the director and overseer of the whole work relating to it: the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase it,

""I have called with a good name Bezaleel";"

as if respect was to be had to his name Bezaleel, as given him by God, and very expressive and significant; whereas the phrase of calling "by name" does not signify the imposing of a name upon him, but the singular and personal choice of him to an office: indeed, his name Bezaleel is very significant, and may be rendered, "in the

shadow of God"; and he was under the shadow, influence, and protection of the Lord, and was called to be concerned in making those things, which were shadows of good things to come; and he may be considered in all as a type of Christ, who is the chief and master builder of his church, has the care and oversight of it, and under whom others work; for except he built the house, they labour in vain that build it; he was called by name, or eminently chosen to this work, he took not this honour to himself, but was called of God, as Bezaleel was, and was hid and abode under the shadow of the Almighty all the while he was concerned in it, see [Ps 91:1](#)

the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; Bezaleel's father's name was Uri, which signifies, "my light"; and his grandfather's name Hur, which has the signification of liberty or freedom; the same that Moses left with Aaron to judge the people of Israel during his stay in the mount, and is thought to have been the husband of Miriam; so that his grandfather being living, he may be supposed to be but a young man: the Jews say {n} he was but thirteen years of age when he was employed in this service, but that is not probable; though indeed his antitype, when but twelve years of age, said, "wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" his Father, whom he calls Uri, my light, [Ps 27:1](#) he being the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; and is the Son of God that makes men free, and they are free indeed; and of whom it is evident that he sprung out of the tribe of Judah, a tribe greatly honoured of God.

{n} Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 6. 2.

[Exodus 31:3](#)

Ver. 3. **And I have filled him with the Spirit of God**,.... Not with the special graces of the Spirit, or with spiritual gifts fitting for spiritual service in the knowledge of spiritual things, and the instruction of men in them, though, no doubt, he might have them; but with the gifts of ingenuity and skill in manual arts, and mechanical operations, as follows:

in wisdom, and in understanding, and in all manner of workmanship; these explain what is meant by the Spirit of God he was filled with; namely, with a sufficient measure of natural wisdom, knowledge, and understanding in all sorts of workmanship hereafter mentioned, to qualify him for his office as a director therein; that is, he had such a share of knowledge of what was to be wrought, such wisdom and understanding in the ingenious and curious manner of working them, that though he did not work with his own hands, yet could teach, guide, and direct others how to do them: and this was not an ordinary but an extraordinary gift of knowledge of these

things; nor was it owing to a fruitful invention, nor to long study and contrivance; but it was by the immediate inspiration of the Spirit of God, which was necessary at this time, the Israelites being now in a general state of ignorance of all ingenious arts and sciences, having lived so many years in a state of servitude, and scarce knew anything but making of bricks: and it may be observed, that God never calls any to any work or service of his but he qualifies for it: in all this Bezaleel was a type of Christ, who was filled with the Holy Spirit without measure; and on whom rested the spirit of wisdom and of counsel, and in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and who, as God's righteous and faithful servant as Mediator, dealt wisely and prudently in all his administrations.

[Exodus 31:4](#)

Ver. 4. **To devise cunning works**,.... To invent, contrive, and draw patterns, for the weavers particularly, for the making of the curtains of the tabernacle, the vail of the most holy place, the ephod, and the curious girdle of it, which were made of cunning work, curiously wrought by the weaver; and so Jarchi interprets this of the weaving of the work of Chosheb, or cunning work, of the devising of cunning works, or of the knowledge of witty inventions, by Wisdom or the Messiah, see [Pr 8:12](#)

to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass; for it is not to be supposed there were either goldsmiths or brasiers among the Israelites; only masons and bricklayers, and brickmakers, and such sort of manufacturers; so that Bezaleel had need of immediate wisdom from the Spirit of God, not only to devise curious works in these several things as in others, but to teach men how to work in them, what tools to work with, and how to use them, how to melt these several metals, and into what forms and shapes to put them, and then to polish them; as there were some things in the temple to be made of gold, as the candlestick, others of silver, as the sockets of the tabernacle, and others of brass, as the altar of burnt offering, and its vessels, with other things.

[Exodus 31:5](#)

Ver. 5. **And in cutting of stones to set them**,.... Not of marble stones, or of any common stones used in building, and the cutting and hewing of them to be laid therein, for of those there was no use in the tabernacle; but of precious stones, and the cutting of them, and setting of them in their ouches or enclosures, as the onyx stones on the shoulders of the high priest, and the twelve precious stones in his breastplate: Bezaleel was taught by the Spirit of God the art of jewelling, and instructed others in

it:

and in carving of timber; or rather, "in cutting timber" {o}; for it is the same word as before, for we have no account of any carved work in the tabernacle; and therefore this must design the work of carpenters and joiners in cutting the shittim wood, making planks and boards of it, and of them the sides of the tabernacle, jointed into sockets; the ark of the testimony, the shewbread table, and altar of incense, which were of timber, and the workmanship of such persons:

to work in all manner of workmanship; in all other manufactories; as spinning, weaving, embroidery, dying various colours, compounding ointment, perfume, &c.

{o} Ue tvrhb "in fabrefactione ligni", Montanus; so Tigurine version.

Exodus 31:6

Ver. 6. **And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan**,.... To be a partner with him, and to assist in the direction and oversight of the work of the tabernacle; which was done that there might appear to be a sufficiency in the direction, and that too much honour might not be given to one tribe; and it is observable, that as Solomon of the tribe of Judah was the builder of the temple, one of the tribe of Dan also was a principal artificer in it, **2Ch 2:14** and it is no unusual thing for two persons to be joined together in matters of moment and importance, as Moses and Aaron, who were sent to Pharaoh for Israel's dismissal out of the land of Egypt; the apostles of Christ, and seventy disciples, who were sent out two by two; the two witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, the two anointed ones standing before the Lord of the whole earth; and Joshua and Zerubbabel in the rebuilding of the temple: nor is it unusual for both such persons to be types of Christ, as Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Zerubbabel, were; and here Bezaleel, as before, and now Aholiab, whose name signifies "the Father's tent" or "tabernacle"; he being concerned in the oversight of the tabernacle of God and the building of it, and his father's name Ahisamach, according to Hillerus {p}, signifies, "one supports", i.e. God; and may be a figure of Christ, whose human nature is the true tabernacle God pitched, and not man, and who, as Mediator, is Jehovah's servant, whom he upholds:

and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted; men of ingenuity, that had good natural parts and abilities, and minds disposed to curious works, and able to perform them, under the guidance and direction of others:

I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee; in the

preceding chapters; these persons were to work under Bezaleel and Aholiab, and to do as they were ordered and directed by them; and having good natural abilities, mechanical heads and hearts, and divine wisdom in a large measure communicated to them, they were greatly qualified for the service of the tabernacle, and making all things appertaining to it: thus Christ, the architect and master builder of his church, has wise builders under him, that work in his house, being qualified with the gifts and graces of his Spirit from him, see [Zec 6:12](#).

{p} Onomast. Sacr. p. 735.

[Exodus 31:7](#)

Ver. 7. **The tabernacle of the congregation**,.... That is, they had wisdom given to make that according to the pattern showed to Moses, and under the direction of the two above persons, to whom Moses communicated it; and from henceforward, in this and some following verses, mention is made of the various things wrought by these subordinate workmen; first the house, and then the furniture of it, as follows:

and the ark of the testimony, and the mercy seat that is thereupon, and all the furniture of the tabernacle; of that part of it called the holy of holies; the furniture of which was only the ark, the mercy seat over that, and the cherubim overshadowing that, where was the seat of the divine Majesty; this was properly his apartment, see [Ex 25:10](#).

[Exodus 31:8](#)

Ver. 8. **And the table and his furniture**,.... The shewbread table, with its dishes, spoons, and bowls, [Ex 25:23](#)

and the pure candlestick with all his furniture; called "pure", because made of pure gold, and was to be kept pure and clean by the priests, and in which pure oil olive was burnt, and gave a clear light; its furniture were its lamps, tongs, and snuff dishes, [Ex 25:31](#)

and the altar of incense: made of shittim wood covered with gold, [Ex 30:1](#).

[Exodus 31:9](#)

Ver. 9. **And the altar of burnt offering with all his furniture**,.... Which was made of shittim wood covered with brass; its furniture were its pans, shovels, basins, &c. [Ex 27:1](#)

and the laver and his foot; for the priests to wash their hands and feet at, [Ex 30:18](#).

Exodus 31:10

Ver. 10. **And the clothes of service**,.... Either those the priests ministered in in the time of service, and which they never wore but when in it, and so might with propriety be so called, and what they were the following words explain; or else these were clothes of blue, purple, and scarlet, and coverings of badgers' skins, in which the ark, the shewbread table, the candlestick, and the golden altar, and other instruments of the tabernacle were wrapped, as Aben Ezra observes, when the Israelites journeyed in the wilderness, see [Nu 4:5](#)

and the holy garments for Aaron the priest; the breastplate, ephod, and robe, the broided coat, mitre, and girdle, [Ex 28:4](#)

and the garments of his sons to minister in the priest's office; the bonnets, coats, girdles, and breeches, [Ex 28:40](#).

Exodus 31:11

Ver. 11. **And the anointing oil, and sweet incense for the holy place**,.... Of the composition of both which, see [Ex 30:23](#)

according to all that I have commanded thee shall they do: not only make all the said things, but make them exactly according to the form and pattern given to Moses, communicated to Bezaleel and Aholiab, whose business it was to see that all things were done by the workmen agreeably to it.

Exodus 31:12

Ver. 12. **And the Lord spake unto Moses**,.... After he had described to him the place of worship, and appointed the priests that should minister in it, and ordered the making of all things appertaining to it, and the workmen that should be concerned therein, he

repeats the law of the sabbath, and puts in mind of the time of worship:

saying: as follows.

Exodus 31:13

Ver. 13. **Speak thou also unto the children of Israel,**.... Notwithstanding all that has been said and ordered concerning making the tabernacle and all things belonging to it; yet this was not to be understood to the violation of the sabbath, or the neglect of that, in which no work was to be done, no, not any relating to the tabernacle and the vessels of it; and though that was to be made, and everything belonging to it, as soon as possible, yet the sabbath was to be observed, and not broken on that account; and this the people of Israel were told of,

saying; **verily**, or "nevertheless" {q},

my sabbaths ye shall keep not sabbaths of years, as the seventh year and the fiftieth year, but of weeks, expressed by the plural number, because there are many of them in course throughout the year, no less than fifty two; and so the apostle uses the same number, Col 2:16 and so do Heathen writers {r}:

for it is a sign between me and you, throughout your generations; a token of the covenant between them, of his being their God and they his people in a peculiar sense; seeing they observed the same day as a day of rest now, on which he had rested at the finishing of the works of creation, which other nations of the world did not observe; of his sanctifying and separating them from all other people; for this was not a sign between him and other nations, but between him and the people of Israel only; and was to be observed throughout their ages, as long as their civil and church state lasted, but not through others:

that [ye] may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you; had separated and distinguished them from the rest of the nations of the world; but if this law had been given to all nations, it could not have been a distinguishing sign of them from others; nor could it be known hereby that God had separated them to himself above all people; and this was done that it might be known, not only by them, for the word "ye" is not in the text, but by others, the nations of the world, as Jarchi; that they were a distinct people, having distinct laws from all others, and particularly this.

{q} Ka "veruntamen", Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Fagius, Vatablus, Drusius, Cartwright, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. {r} "Metuentem sabbata" Juvenal.

Satyr. 14.

Exodus 31:14

Ver. 14. **Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore**,.... Strictly observe it, according to the rules given concerning it:

for it is holy unto you; a day that was set apart of God for holy exercises, peculiarly on their account:

everyone that defileth it; by doing any servile work upon it, or not observing it in a religious way;

shall surely be put to death; by the hand of the civil magistrate; if the law of the Jewish sabbath is now in force, the sanction continues, and the violation of it ought to be punished by a judge with death:

for whosoever doeth any work therein; so much as to kindle a fire, and dress any food, by boiling or roasting, or any other way:

that soul shall be cut off from among his people; that is, shall die by the hand of the civil magistrate, it being but another phrase for being put to death; though the Jewish writers, particularly Jarchi, understand the former phrase, "put to death", as to be done by a civil magistrate, when there are witnesses and full proof of the case; but this of "cutting off" by the hand of God, by immediate punishment from heaven, when it was done secretly, and there was no proof to be made of it.

Exodus 31:15

Ver. 15. **Six days may work be done**;.... Allowed to be done by an Israelite, if he would; for this is not a command to work, but a permission or grant to do it; and therefore, seeing they had so many days granted them for their use, it could not be thought hard and unreasonable that God should claim one day in seven for his own use and service, and oblige them to refrain from work on it:

but in the seventh [is] the sabbath of rest; from worldly labour, and was typical of spiritual rest here, and eternal rest hereafter:

holy to the Lord; separated from other days, and entirely devoted to the worship and

service of God, and to be kept holy to the Lord in all holy and religious exercises, as hearing and reading the word, praying, praising, &c.

whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, [he] shall surely be put to death; the Targum of Jonathan adds, by casting stones, and so we find that the first transgressor of this law we read of was stoned to death, [Nu 15:35](#).

Exodus 31:16

Ver. 16. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath,.... On whom the sabbath of the seventh day was only enjoined, as well as that of the seventh and of the fiftieth years, being all ceremonial and shadowy:

to observe the sabbath throughout their generations; so long as the Mosaic dispensation lasted, and their civil polity and church state continued, even until the Messiah came, when all those Jewish shadows, rites, and ceremonies, fled away and disappeared,

for a perpetual covenant; just in the same sense as circumcision was, Ge 17:13.

Exodus 31:17 Ver. 17. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever,.... In like sense as the land of Canaan was given them for an everlasting possession; and the covenant of circumcision, and the ordinance of the passover, and the fast on the day of atonement, were for ever; that is, unto the end of the Jewish world and state, at the coming of Christ, when a new world and state of things began, see Ge 17:8 for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed; which is to be understood figuratively after the manner of men, who ceasing from toil and labour find rest and refreshment; but not really and properly, for as not labour, and weariness, and fatigue, so neither rest nor refreshment can be properly said of God; but this denotes his cessation from the works of creation, though not of providence, and of the delight and pleasure he takes in a view of them; this is observed, not as the foundation of this law, and the reason of its being made, but as an illustration of it, and as an argument, showing the reasonableness of it, and the similarity of it with what God himself had done, and therefore the enjoining of it could not reasonably be objected to. See Gill on "Ex 20:11". Exodus 31:18 Ver. 18. And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him on Mount Sinai,.... After all those laws, orders, and instructions before related, which having done, he ceased to converse with him any longer in that manner he had, and at parting gave him two tables of testimony; the two tables of the law, which is a testimony of the will of God, and contained the duty of the Israelites both towards God and man, and are reducible to these two, love to God, and love to our neighbour:

five of the commands of the decalogue were written on one table, and five on the other; or it may be rather four on one table, the first being the largest, and containing the duty owing to God, and six on the other, which regard the duty of men one to another; so Orpheus the Heathen poet, speaking of the law of Moses, calls it *diplaka yesmon* {s}. "Tables of stone"; the Targum of Jonathan will have them to be of the sapphire stone, from the throne of glory; the paraphrast seems to have respect to Ex 24:10 and, with as little appearance of truth, says their weight was forty seahs; it is more probable they were of marble stone, of which there were great quantities in Mount Sinai. Dr. Shaw says {t} that part of Mount Sinai, which lies to the westward of the plain of Rephidim, consists of a hard reddish marble like "porphyry", but is distinguished from it by the representations of little trees and bushes, which are dispersed all over it. The naturalists call this sort of marble "embuscatum", or "bushy marble"; some think Sinai had its name from thence {u}. This may denote the firmness, stability, and duration of the law, not as in the hands of Moses, from which these tables were cast and broke, but as in the hands of Christ, and laid up in him the ark of the covenant, the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness: and it may also figure the hardness of man's heart, which is destitute of spiritual life, obdurate and impenitent, stupid, senseless and ignorant, stubborn and inflexible, and not subject to the law of God, and on which no impressions can be made but by the power and grace of God: written with the finger of God: by God himself, and not by an angel, or by any creature or instrument: and it is by the finger of God, the Spirit, grace, and power of God, that the laws of God are put into the inward part, and written on the heart, to which the apostle refers, 2Co 3:3. This account is given by way of transition to what is recorded in the next chapter. {s} De Deo, "prope finem". {t} Travels, p. 443. {u} See Buxtorf. in voce hno.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 32:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 32

This chapter gives an account of the idolatry of the Israelites making and worshipping a golden calf, [Ex 32:1](#) the information of it God gave to Moses, bidding him at the same time not to make any suit in their favour, that he might consume them, and make a large nation out Moses's family, [Ex 32:7](#) the intercession of Moses for them, in which he succeeded, [Ex 32:11](#) his descent from the mount with the two tables in his hands, accompanied by Joshua, when he was an eyewitness of their idolatry, which raised his indignation, that he cast the two tables out of his hands and broke them, took the calf and burnt it, and ground it to powder, and made the children of Israel drink of it, [Ex 32:15](#) the examination of Aaron about the fact, who excused himself, [Ex 32:21](#) the orders given to the Levites, who joined themselves to Moses, to slay every man his brother, which they did to the number of 3000 men, [Ex 32:25](#) another intercession for them by Moses, which gained a respite of them for a time, for they are threatened to be visited still for their sin, and they were plagued for it, [Ex 32:30](#).

Ver. 1. **And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount,**.... The time, according to the Targum of Jonathan, being elapsed, which he had fixed for his descent, and through a misreckoning, as Jarchi suggests; they taking the day of his going up to be one of the forty days, at the end of which he was to return, whereas he meant forty complete days; but it is not probable that Moses knew himself how long he should stay, and much less that he acquainted them before hand of it; but he staying longer than they supposed he would, they grew uneasy and impatient, and wanted to set out in their journey to Canaan, and to have some symbol and representation of deity to go before them:

the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron; who with Hur was left to judge them in the absence of Moses: it was very likely that they had had conferences with him before upon this head, but now they got together in a tumultuous manner, and determined to carry their point against all that he should say to the contrary:

and said unto him, up; put us off no longer, make no more delay, but arise at once, and set about what has been once and again advised to and importuned:

make us gods which shall go before us; not that they were so very stupid to think, that anything that could be made with hands was really God, or even could have life and breath, and the power of self-motion, or of walking before them; but that something

should be made as a symbol and representation of the divine Being, carried before them; for as for the cloud which had hitherto gone before them, from their coming out of Egypt, that had not moved from its place for forty days or more, and seemed to them to be fixed on the mount, and would not depart from it; and therefore they wanted something in the room of it as a token of the divine Presence with them:

for [as for] this Moses; of whom they speak with great contempt, though he had been the deliverer of them, and had wrought so many miracles in their favour, and had been the instrument of so much good unto them:

the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt; this they own, but do not seem to be very thankful for it:

we wot not what is become of him; they could scarcely believe that he was alive, that it was possible to live so long a time without eating and drinking; or they supposed he was burnt on the mount of flaming fire from before the Lord, as the Targum of Jonathan expresses it.

Exodus 32:2

Ver. 2. And Aaron said unto them,.... Perceiving that they were not to be dissuaded from their evil counsel, and diverted from their purpose, but were determined at all events to have an image made to represent God unto them in a visible manner:

break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters; these were some of the jewels in gold they had borrowed of the Egyptians; and it seems that, in those times and countries, men, as well as women, used to wear earrings, and so Pliny {w} says, in the eastern countries men used to wear gold in their ears; and this may be confirmed from the instance of the Ishmaelites and Midianites, [Jud 8:24](#). Aaron did not ask the men for theirs, but for those of their wives and children; it may be, because he might suppose they were more fond of them, and would not so easily part with them, hoping by this means to have put them off of their design:

and bring [them] unto me; to make a god of, as they desired, that is, the representation of one.

{w} Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 37.

Exodus 32:3

Ver. 3. **And all the people brake off the golden earrings, which were in their ears,**.... The men took off their earrings, and persuaded their wives and children, or obliged them to part with theirs; though the Targum of Jonathan says the women refused to give their ornaments to their husbands, therefore all the people immediately broke off all the golden ornaments which were in their ears {x}, so intent were they upon idolatry. This is to be understood not of every individual, but of the greatest part of the people; so apostle explains it of some of them, [1Co 10:7](#). Idolaters spare no cost nor pains to support their worship, and will strip themselves, their wives, and children, of their ornaments, to deck their idols; which may shame the worshippers of the true God, who are oftentimes too backward to contribute towards the maintenance of his worship and service:

and brought [them] unto Aaron: presently, the selfsame day; they soon forgot the commands enjoined them to have no other gods, save one, and to make no graven image to bow down to it, and their own words, [Ex 24:7](#).

{x} So Pirke Eliezer, c. 45.

Exodus 32:4

Ver. 4. **And he received [them] at their hand,**.... For the use they delivered them to him:

and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf; that is, after he had melted the gold, and cast it into a mould, which gave it the figure of a calf, and with his tool wrought it into a more agreeable form, he took off the roughness of it, and polished it; or if it was in imitation of the Egyptian Apis or Osiris, he might with his graving tool engrave such marks and figures as were upon that; to cause the greater resemblance, so Selden {y} thinks; see Gill "[Jer 46:20](#)" or else the sense may be, that he drew the figure of a calf with his tool, or made it in "a mould" {z}, into which he poured in the melted gold,

and made it a molten calf; the Targum of Jonathan gives another sense of the former clause, "he bound it up in a napkin"; in a linen cloth or bag, i.e. the gold of the ear rings, and then put it into the melting pot, and so cast it into a mould, and made a calf of it. Jarchi takes notice of this sense, and it is espoused by Bochart {a}, who produces two passages of Scripture for the confirmation of it, [Jud 8:24](#) and illustrates

it by [Isa 46:6](#). What inclined Aaron to make it in the form of a calf, is not easy to say; whether in imitation of the cherubim, one of the faces of which was that of an ox, as Moncaeus thought; or whether in imitation of the Osiris of the Egyptians, who was worshipped in a living ox, and sometimes in the image of one, even a golden one. Plutarch is express for it, and says {b}, that the ox was an image of Osiris, and that it was a golden one; and so says Philo the Jew {c}, the Israelites, emulous of Egyptian figments, made a golden ox; or whether he did this to make them ashamed of their idolatry, thinking they would never be guilty of worshipping the form of an ox eating grass, or because an ox was an emblem of power and majesty:

and they said, these be thy gods, O Israel, [which brought] thee up out of the land of Egypt; they own they were, brought up out of that land by the divine Being; and they could not be so stupid as to believe, that this calf, which was only a mass of gold, figured and decorated, was inanimate, had no life nor breath, and was just made, after their coming out of Egypt, was what brought them from hence; but that this was a representation of God, who had done this for them; yet some Jewish writers are so foolish as to suppose, that through art it had the breath of life in it, and came out of the mould a living calf, Satan, or Samael, entering into it, and lodged in it {d}.

{y} De Diis Syris Syntagm. 1. c. 4. p. 138. {z} jrxb wta ruyw "formavit illud modulo", Piscator; so some in Ben Melech, and in Vatablus; and so the Vulgate Latin, "formant opere fusorio"; see Fagius in loc. {a} Hierozoic. p. 1. l. 2. c. 39. col. 334, 335. {b} De Isid. & Osir. {c} De Vita Mosis, l. 3. p. 677. {d} Pirke Eliezer, c. 45.

[Exodus 32:5](#)

Ver. 5. **And when Aaron saw it**,.... In what form it was, and what a figure it made, and how acceptable it was to the Israelites. The Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase it,

"and Aaron saw Hur slain before him;"

for reproving them for their idolatry, as the Midrash {e}, quoted by Jarchi, says: and Aaron fearing they would take away his life if he opposed them,

he built an altar before it; that sacrifice might be offered on it to it:

and Aaron made proclamation, and said, tomorrow [is] a feast to the Lord; that is, he gave orders to have it published throughout the camp, there would be solemn sacrifices offered up to the Lord, as represented by this calf, and a feast thereon,

which was a public invitation of them to the solemnity: though some think this was a protracting time, and putting the people off till the morrow, who would have been for offering sacrifice immediately, hoping that Moses would come down from the mount before that time, and prevent their idolatry.

{e} So Pirke Eliezer, c. 45.

Exodus 32:6

Ver. 6. **And they rose up early in the morning**,.... Being eager of, and intent upon their idol worship:

and offered burnt offerings; upon the altar Aaron had made, where they were wholly consumed:

and brought peace offerings: which were to make a feast to the Lord, and of which they partook:

and the people sat down to eat and to drink; as at a feast:

and rose up to play; to dance and sing, as was wont to be done by the Egyptians in the worship of their Apis or Ox; and Philo the Jew says {f}, of the Israelites, that having made a golden ox, in imitation of the Egyptian Typho, he should have said Osiris, for Typho was hated by the Egyptians, being the enemy of Osiris; they sung and danced: the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem interpret it of idolatry; some understand this of their lewdness and uncleanness, committing fornication as in the worship of Peor, taking the word in the same sense as used by Potiphar's wife, [Ge 39:14](#).

{f} Ut supra, (De Vita Mosis, l. 3. p. 677.) & de Temulentia, p. 254.

Exodus 32:7

Ver. 7. **And the Lord said unto Moses, go, get thee down**,.... In [De 9:12](#) it is added, "quickly", and so the Septuagint version here: this was said after the Lord had finished his discourse with him, and had given him the two tables of stone, and he was about to depart, but the above affair happening he hastens his departure; indeed the idolatry began the day before, and he could have acquainted him with it, if it had been his pleasure, but he suffered the people to go the greatest length before a stop was put to their impiety:

for thy people which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves; their works, as the Targum of Jonathan supplies it, their ways and their manners; their minds, the imaginations of their hearts, were first corrupted, and this led on to a corruption of actions, by which they corrupted and defiled themselves yet more and more, and made themselves abominable in the sight of God, as corrupt persons and things must needs be; and what can be a greater corruption and abomination than idolatry? the Lord calls these people not his people, being displeased with them, though they had been, and were, and still continued; for, notwithstanding this idolatry, he did not cast them off from being his people, or write a "Loammi" on them; but he calls them Moses's people, as having broken the law delivered to them by him, they had promised to obey, and so were liable to the condemnation and curse of it; and because they had been committed to his care and charge, and he had been the instrument of their deliverance, and therefore it was great ingratitude to him to act the part they had done, as well as impiety to God; wherefore, though it was the Lord that brought them out of Egypt, it is ascribed to Moses as the instrument, to make the evil appear the greater. Jarchi very wrongly makes these people to be the mixed multitude he supposes Moses had proselyted, and therefore called his people.

Exodus 32:8

Ver. 8. **They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them,**....
The Targum of Jonathan adds, by way of explanation,

"on Sinai, saying, ye shall not make to yourselves an image, or figure, or any similitude."

This was the command God had given to them; this the way he had directed them to walk in; from this they turned aside, by making the golden calf as an image or representation of God; and this they had done very quickly, since it was but about six weeks ago that this command was given; wherefore if Moses had delayed coming down from the mount, they had made haste to commit iniquity; and, perhaps, this observation is made of their quick defection, in opposition to their complaint of Moses's long absence:

they have made them a molten calf; for though it was made by Aaron, or by his direction to the founder or goldsmith, yet it was at their request and earnest solicitation; they would not be easy without it:

and have worshipped it; by bowing the knee to it, kissing it or their hands at the approach of it, see [Ho 13:2](#).

and have sacrificed thereunto burnt offerings and peace offerings:

and said, these be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt; the very words they used, [Ex 32:4](#) and which were taken particular notice of by the Lord with resentment.

[Exodus 32:9](#)

Ver. 9. And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people,.... He had observed their ways and works, their carriage and behaviour; he had seen them before this time; he knew from all eternity what they would be, that their neck would be as an iron sinew, and their brow brass; but now he saw that in fact which he before saw as future, and they proved to be the people he knew they would be; besides, this is said to give Moses the true character of them, which might be depended upon, since it was founded upon divine knowledge and observation:

and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people; obstinate and self-willed, resolute in their own ways, and will not be reclaimed, inflexible and not subjected to the yoke of the divine law; a metaphor taken from such creatures as will not submit their necks or suffer the yoke or bridle to be put upon them, but draw back and slip away; or, as Aben Ezra thinks, to a man that goes on his way upon a run, and will not turn his neck to him that calls him, so disobedient and irreclaimable were these people.

[Exodus 32:10](#)

Ver. 10. Now, therefore, let me alone,.... And not solicit him with prayers and supplications in favour of these people, but leave him to take his own way with them, without troubling him with any suit on their behalf; and so the Targum of Jonathan,

"and now leave off thy prayer, and do not cry for them before me;"

as the Prophet Jeremiah was often bid not to pray for this people in his time, which was a token of God's great displeasure with them, as well as shows the prevalence of prayer with him; that he knows not how, as it were, humanly speaking, to deny the requests of his children; and even though made not on their own account, but on the account of a sinful and disobedient people:

that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: which suggests that they were deserving of the wrath of God to the uttermost, and to be destroyed from off the face of the earth, and even to be punished with an everlasting destruction:

and I will make of thee a great nation; increase his family to such a degree, as to make them as great a nation or greater than the people of Israel were, see [De 9:14](#) or the meaning is, he would set him over a great nation, make him king over a people as large or larger than they, which is a sense mentioned by Fagius and Vatablus; and, indeed, as Bishop Patrick observes, if this people had been destroyed, there would have been no danger of the promise not being made good, which was made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, concerning the multiplication of their seed, urged by Moses, [Ex 32:13](#) seeing that would have stood firm, if a large nation was made out of the family of Moses, who descended from them: this was a very great temptation to Moses, and had he been a selfish man, and sought the advancement of his own family, and careless of, and indifferent to the people of Israel, he would have accepted of it; it is a noble testimony in his favour, and proves him not to be the designing man he is represented by the deists.

[Exodus 32:11](#)

Ver. 11. **And Moses besought the Lord his God,**.... As the Lord was the God of Moses, his covenant God, and he had an interest in him, he made use of it in favour of the people of Israel:

and said, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people? so as to think or speak of consuming them utterly; otherwise he knew there was reason for his being angry and wroth with them; but though they were deserving of his hot wrath and displeasure, and even to be dealt with in the manner proposed, yet he entreats he would consider they were his people; his special people, whom he had chose above all people, and had redeemed them from the house of bondage, had given them laws, and made a covenant with them, and many promises unto them, and therefore hoped he would not consume them in his hot displeasure; God had called them the people of Moses, and Moses retorts it, and calls them the people of God, and makes use of their relation to him as an argument with him in their favour; and which also shows that Moses did not understand that the Lord by calling them his people disowned them as his:

which thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? this the Lord had ascribed to Moses, and observes it is an aggravation of their

ingratitude to Moses, and here Moses retorts, and ascribes it to God, and to his mighty power; as for himself he was only a weak feeble instrument, the Lord was the efficient cause of their deliverance, in which he had shown the exceeding greatness of his power; and he argues from hence, that seeing he had exerted his mighty arm in bringing them from thence, that he would not now lift it up against them and destroy them.

[Exodus 32:12](#)

Ver. 12. **Wherefore should the Egyptians speak and say,....** Those that remained, as the Targum of Jonathan, who were not drowned in the Red sea: a good man will be concerned for the honour and glory of God among the enemies of his people, that their mouths may not be opened to blaspheme the Lord and speak ill of his ways, see [Jos 7:9](#) and this is sometimes an argument with God himself, not to do that to his people they deserve, lest it should give occasion to the enemy to speak reproachfully, insult, and triumph, [De 32:26](#)

for mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth; that he brought them out of Egypt, not with a good but ill design; not to bring them into the land of Canaan, as they promised themselves, but to destroy them in the mountains; not to erect them into a great kingdom and nation, which should make a considerable figure in the world, but to cut them off from being a people at all: the mountains where they now were, were Sinai and Horeb, and there might be others thereabout, among which they were encamped: the Targum of Jonathan is,

"among the mountains of Tabor, and Hermon, and Sirion, and Sinai:"

turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people; not that there is any turning or shadow of turning with God, or any change of his mind, or any such passions and affections in him as here expressed; but this is said after the manner of men concerning him, when he alters the course of his dealings with men according to his unalterable will, and does not do the evil threatened by him, and which the sins of men deserve.

[Exodus 32:13](#)

Ver. 13. **Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants,....** The covenant he made with them, the promise he had made unto them, with an oath annexed to it:

to whom thou swarest by thine own self; which he did, because he could swear by no greater; and for the confirmation of his covenant and promise, see [Ge 22:16](#)

and saidst unto them; for what was said to Abraham was repeated and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob:

I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven; multitudes of which are out of sight, and cannot be seen with the naked eye, nor numbered:and all this land that I have spoken of; the land of Canaan, then inhabited by several nations:will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever; as long as they are a people, a body politic, and especially while obedient to the divine will; but should they be now cut off, this promise would become of no effect: this is the great argument Moses makes use of, and the most forcible one. Exodus 32:14Ver. 14. And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people. He did not do what he threatened to do, and seemed to have in his thoughts and designs, but did what Moses desired he would, Ex 32:12 not that any of God's thoughts or the determinations of his mind are alterable; for the thoughts of his heart are to all generations; but he changes the outward dispensations of his providence, or his methods of acting with men, which he has been taking or threatened to take; and this being similar to what they do when they repent of anything, who alter their course, hence repentance is ascribed to God, though, properly speaking, it does not belong to him, see Jer 18:8. Aben Ezra thinks that the above prayer of Moses, which was so prevalent with God, does not stand in its proper place, but should come after Ex 32:31 for, to what purpose, says he, should Moses say to the Israelites, Ex 32:30 "peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin": if he was appeased by his prayer before? Exodus 32:15Ver. 15. And Moses turned, and went down from the mount,... He turned himself from God, with whom he had been conversing forty days; his back was to the ascent of the mount, and he turned himself in order to go down; or "he looked" {g}, as a man considers what is to be done, as Aben Ezra observes, and he saw that he was obliged to go down in haste:and the two tables of the testimony [were] in his hand; or hands, as in Ex 32:19 for they were, perhaps, as much as he could carry in both hands, being of stone, as in Ex 31:18 on which was written the law, the "testimony" of the will of God with respect to what was to be done or not done:the letters were written on both their sides, on the one side and on the other were they written; some think that the engraving of the letters was such, that it went through the stones, and in a miraculous manner the letters and lines were in a regular order, and might be read on the other sides; to which Jarchi seems to incline, saying, the letters might be read, and it was a work of wonders; others think that the letters were written both within and without, like Ezekiel's book of woes; that the same that was within side was written without, that so, when held up, they might be read by those that stood before and those that stood behind; but rather so it was that

the whole was written within, some of the commands on the right, and some on the left, and so the tables might be clapped together as a book is folded. {g} Npyw "et aspexit", Pagninus. Exodus 32:16Ver. 16. And the tables were the work of God,.... And not of angels or men; the stones were made and formed by God into the shape they were:and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables; the letters in which the law was written were of his framing, devising, and engraving; and this was to show that this law was his own, and contained his mind and will; and to give the greater dignity and authority to it, and to deter men from breaking it. Exodus 32:17Ver. 17. And when Joshua heard the noise of the people, as they shouted,.... Dancing about the calf: when Moses went up into the mount, Joshua went with him, and tarried in a lower part of the mount all the forty days until he returned, see Ex 24:13 though not so low as the bottom of the mount where the people were, nor so near it as to know what they did there, for of their affairs he seems to be entirely ignorant; nor so high as where Moses was, or, however, not in the cloud where he conversed with God, for of what passed between them he had no knowledge, until declared by Moses:he said unto Moses, [there is a] noise of war in the camp; such a noise as soldiers make in an onset for battle; he supposed that some enemy was come upon and had attacked the people, and that this noise was the noise of the enemy, or of the Israelites, or both, just beginning the battle; or on the finishing of it on the account of victory on one side or the other; and as he was the general of the army, it must give him a concern that he should be absent at such a time. Exodus 32:18Ver. 18. And he said,.... Not Joshua, as Saadiah Gaon thinks, but Moses, in answer to what Joshua had said:[it is] not the voice of [them that] shout for mastery; that have got the better of it, and have obtained the victory, and shout on that account; or, "not the voice of a cry of strength", or "of a strong cry" {h}; that is, of men who have got the victory, and are in high spirits, and shout with a strong voice; and so the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan,"not the voice of strong men that overcome in battle:"neither [is it] the voice of [them that] cry for being overcome; which is not a voice of shouting, but of howling; or, "not the voice of the cry of weakness", or "of a weak cry" {i}; who being unable to stand their ground are conquered, and make a bitter outcry on falling into the enemy's hands, or being wounded shriek terribly, and so the above Targums,"not the voice of the weak who are overcome by the enemy in battle:"[but] the noise of [them that] sing do I hear; as at a merry entertainment, either on a civil or religious account: Moses, who knew what the children of Israel had done, and what they were about, could better judge of the nature of the sound he heard than Joshua could, who knew nothing of what was transacting, {h} hrwbg twne lwq "vox eorum qui respondeant fortiter", Tigurine version; "vox clamoris fortis", Drusius. {i} hwwlh twne lwq "vox eorum qui respondeant infirmiter", Tigurine version; "vox clamoris debilis", Drusius. Exodus 32:19Ver. 19. And it came to pass, as soon, as he came nigh unto the camp,.... To the bottom of the mountain, and pretty near where the people were encamped:that he saw the calf, and the dancing; the golden image of the calf, and the

people dancing about it, in honour of it, and as glad they had got a symbol and representation of God to go before them; and so the Egyptians did before the golden ox; as Philo says, before observed: and Moses's anger waxed hot: he fell into a passion of indignation at the sight of such execrable idolatry, though he was so meek a man, and though he had himself expostulated with the Lord why his wrath should wax hot against this people; but, when he saw it with his own eyes he could not contain himself, but his spirit was raised to a very great pitch of anger, and could not forbear showing it in some way or another, and particularly in the following manner: and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount; of Sinai; at the foot of it: he brought the tables, though he knew what they had done, and no doubt showed them to them, told them what they were, and enlarged on the wonderful condescension and goodness of God in giving them such laws, and writing them with his own hand, engraving them himself on such tables of stone; and then broke them to pieces, to denote that they had broken these laws, and deserved to be broke in pieces and destroyed themselves; and this he did before their eyes, that they might be the more affected with it, and be the more sensible of their loss; and this was not the mere effect of passion, at least a sinful one, but was under the influence and direction of God himself; since we never read he was blamed for this action, though afterwards ordered to make two tables like them: the Jews say {k}, this was done on the seventeenth day of Tammuz, which answers to part of June and part of July, and is observed by them as a fast on account of it. {k} Misn. Taanith, c. 4. sect. 7. Exodus 32:20 Ver. 20. And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire,.... Melted it down into a mass of gold, whereby it lost its form, and had no more the appearance of a calf: and ground it to powder; but how this was done is not easy to say, whether by beating the mass of gold into thin plates, and then filing them small; for this art has remained unknown; the chemists have boasted of it as only possessed of it; but it seems Moses, learned in all the learning of the Egyptians, had it: however, it is now certain by various experiments, that gold, though a very thick and heavy body, consists of parts which are separable from one another, and to be divided into infinite subtler parts: the famous Dr. Halley has shown that one grain of gold may be divided into 10,000 parts, and yet visible; and Dr. Keil has demonstrated that a cubic thumb's breadth of gold is divisible into 47,619,047 parts, which do not escape the sight: according to the computation of the said Dr. Halley, leaf gold, with which silver threads are gilded, is not thicker than the 124,500 part of a thumb's breadth; so that a cube of the hundredth part of a thumb's breadth of the said subtle parts may contain 243,000,000 {l}: and strawed it upon the water; of the brook that descended out of the mount, De 9:21 now called the fountain of St. Catharine; which Dr. Shaw {m} says, after it has supplied the demands of the convent (now built on this mount) is received without into a large basin, which running over, forms a little rill: and another traveller {n} speaks of a fountain about the middle of Mount Sinai, which, though small, was found in it running water very wholesome and refreshing: but if this was a brook of

running water, it seems more likely that water was taken out of it and put into a proper vessel or vessels, on which the powder of the golden calf was strewed; or otherwise it would have been carried away with the stream, and could not have been taken up and given to the people to drink, as is next said; and this shows that it must be reduced to a very small light powder indeed, to float upon the top of the water and not sink to the bottom, as mere filings of gold would necessarily do: and made the children of Israel drink of it; not the whole body of them, or every individual, but the more principal persons, and such who had been the most active in encouraging the making of the calf, and the worshipping of it: this was done not only that they might entirely lose their gold and have no manner of profit by it, but that the idol, which is nothing in the world, might be brought to nothing indeed, and that there might be no remains of it to be abused to superstitious uses, as well as to show them their folly in worshipping that which could not save itself; and by drinking it, whereby it passed through them and became an excrement, to express the utmost abhorrence and detestation of it; as also to show that they deserved the curse of God to enter into them, as oil into their bowels, as that water did, and be utterly destroyed: the Jewish writers, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra, suppose this water, with the powder of the golden calf in it, had the same effect and was for the same use as the water of jealousy, that it made the bellies of those that drank it to swell: and the Targum of Jonathan observes, that whoever gave any golden vessel towards the making of the calf, there was a sign appeared in his countenance: and Aben Ezra suggests the same, but neither of them say what it was: but an ancient Latin poet, quoted by Selden {o}, reports from the Hebrew writers, that whoever were guilty of this idolatry, as soon as they drank of the water their beards became yellow as gold, whereby the Levites knew who were guilty, and slew them; but as this is quite fabulous, so I have not met with it in any Jewish writer, only an author of theirs, of great antiquity and credit with them, says {p}, that whoever kissed the calf with his whole heart, his lips became golden. {l} Vid. Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 2. p. 247. {m} Travels, p. 242. Ed. 2. {n} Baumgarten. peregrinatio, l. 1. c. 24. p. 61, 62. {o} De Diis Syris Syntagma, l. c. 4. p. 156. {p} Pirke Eliezer, c. 45. Exodus 32:21 Ver. 21. And Moses said unto Aaron,.... Having destroyed the calf, and thereby expressed his abhorrence of their idolatry, he examines the principal persons concerned, and inquires into the cause and reason of it, how it came about; and begins with Aaron, though his own brother, with whom along with Hur he had committed the government of the people during his absence; and therefore was justly accountable for such a transaction, which could not have been without his knowledge and consent: no mention is made of Hur, whether he was dead or no is not certain; the Jewish writers say he was, and that he was killed for reproving the Israelites for their wickedness; and it looks as if he was dead, since he was not in the examination, and we hear of him no more afterwards: what did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them? as idolatry is, than which no sin can be greater, it being not only a breach of the first table of the law, but directly against God, against the very being of

God, and his honour and glory; it is a denial of him, and setting up an idol in his room, and giving to that the glory that is only due to his name; and Aaron being the chief magistrate, whose business it was to see that the laws of God were observed, and to restrain the people from sin, and to have been a terror to evil doers; yet falling in with them, and conniving at them, he is charged with bringing sin upon them, or them into that; and is asked what the people had done to him, that he should do this to them, what offence they had given him, what injury they had done him, that he bore them a grudge for it, and took this method to be revenged? for it is suggested, had they used him ever so ill, he could not have requited it in a stronger manner than by leading them into such a sin, the consequence of which must be ruin and destruction, see Ge 20:9 or else Moses inquires of Aaron what methods the people had made use of to prevail upon him to suffer them to do such a piece of wickedness; whether it was by persuasion and artful insinuations, or by threatening to take away his life if he did not comply, or in what manner they had wrought upon his weak side, to induce him to take such a step. Exodus 32:22 Ver. 22. And Aaron said, let not the anger of my lord wax hot,.... He addresses him in a very respectful manner, though his younger brother, being in a superior office, the chief ruler of the people, king in Jeshurun; and he perceived a violent emotion rising in him, great indignation in his countenance, and an high resentment of what was done, and therefore he entreats his patience to hear him, in a few words, what he had to say, and he begins with the well known character of the people: thou knowest the people, that they [are] set on mischief; or are "in wickedness" {q}; wholly in it, and under the power and influence of it, given up to it, and bent upon it; and there was no restraining them from it; and he appeals to the knowledge of Moses himself for the truth of this, of which their several murmurings against him, since they came out of Egypt, were a proof; see 1Jo 5:19. {q} erb "in malo", Montanus, Drusius, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. Exodus 32:23 Ver. 23. For they said unto me, make us gods, which shall go before us,.... Which was true, Ex 32:1 but then he should have told them, that gods were not to be made; that what were made with hands were no gods, and could not go before them; that the making of any image, similitude, or representation of God, was forbidden by him, as they had lately heard from his own mouth; he should have dissuaded from such idolatry, by showing them the evil nature of the sin, and the ruin they exposed themselves to by it: for [as for] this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him; their words he truly recites, and perhaps might choose the rather to mention them, because they carried in them some reflection on Moses for staying so long in the mount; and as if that contributed much to this affair, and which put the people on forming such a scheme, they concluding he must be dead through famine; or, as the Targum of Jonathan, be burnt with flaming fire from the Lord. Exodus 32:24 Ver. 24. And I said unto them, whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off,.... That is, any ear rings of gold, let them loose or take them off their ears: so they gave [it] me; of their own accord, as if unasked by him, though he had bid them bring it to

him, Ex 32:2:then I cast it into the fire; to melt it, but says nothing of the mould the melted gold was poured into:and there came out this calf; he speaks of it as if the gold became in the form of a calf without any design, or without using any methods to put it in this form; but that it was a matter of chance, or rather something preternatural and miraculous; he speaks of it as if it was alive, and came out of itself: and indeed the Jews represent it as done by magic art, and by the operation of Satan, and speak of it as coming out alive, bellowing and dancing; and the Targum of Jonathan is,"and I cast it into the fire, and Satan entered into the midst of it, and out of it came the likeness of this calf."Aaron says not a word of his fashioning it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf; but Moses learned this elsewhere, and has recorded it. What Moses thought of this apology is not said; it could not be satisfactory to him: and it is certain the conduct of Aaron in this affair was displeasing to God; and it seemed as if he would have destroyed him, had not Moses prayed for him, De 9:20. Exodus 32:25Ver. 25. And when Moses saw that the people [were] naked,... Not in their bodies, being stripped of their ear rings; for parting with them was not sufficient to denominate them naked in a corporeal sense; nor as being without their armour, which was laid aside while they were eating, and drinking, and dancing about the calf, and so might be thought a proper opportunity for the Levites to fall upon them, by the order of Moses, and slay them: but it can hardly be thought that all the people bore arms, and that Moses took the advantage of their being without them: but rather they were naked in their souls, through their sin, and the shame of their nakedness appeared; their sin was made manifest, and they were discovered to be what they were; and they were now deprived of the divine protection; the cloud was departing from them, the symbol of the divine Presence, God being provoked by their sins; unless it is to be understood of their ceasing from work, and keeping holy day in honour of the calf, and so were loitering about, and not attending to the business of their callings, in which sense the word sometimes seems to be used, see Ex 5:4for Aaron had made them naked unto [their] shame amongst their enemies; to part with their ear rings, or lay aside their armour while feasting, could not be so much to their shame among their enemies; but to sin against God, in the manner they did, was to their shame, which Aaron was a means of by not doing all he could to hinder it, and by doing what he did to encourage it; and now he made them naked to their shame by exposing it, saying they were a people set on mischief, and given up to sin and wickedness; and what they had now done served to expose them to shame even among their enemies, both now and hereafter; when they should hear of their shameful revolt from God, after so many great and good things done for them, and of the change of their gods, and of their fickleness about them, which was not usual with the Gentiles: though the last word may be rendered, "among those that rise up from you"; that should spring from them, come up in their room, and succeed them, their posterity, as in Nu 32:14 and so Onkelos renders it, "to your generations", and is so to be understood, as Abendana observes; and then the sense is, that this sin of making and worshipping the golden

calf, and keeping a holy day, would be to their shame and disgrace, among their posterity, in all succeeding ages. (If it is quite possible the people were physically naked, having taken off all their clothes to indulge in the idolatrous worship of the calf and sexual immorality that usually is associated with such wicked practices. Editor.)

Exodus 32:26 Ver. 26. Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp,.... In one of the gates of it; for it doubtless had more than one to go in and out of, as is clear from Ex 32:27 it being probably entrenched all around; here Moses set himself, it being the usual place, as in cities, where the people were summoned together on important occasions, and justice and judgment were administered: and said, who is on the Lord's side? [let him come] unto me; who is for the worship of the true God, and him only, and against the worship of a gold calf, or any other idol, and is zealous for the glory of God, and the honour of his name; and all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him; that is, all those that had not given in to the idolatry of the calf; all is put for many. Jarchi infers from hence, that this tribe was wholly free from that sin; but the contrary is most evident, for it appears from the context that many of them were slain for it; yea, as, on the one hand, they were only of the tribe of Levi, who joined themselves to Moses, though there was no doubt many in all the tribes that were not in the idolatry; so, on the other hand, there were none slain, or very few, but of the tribe of Levi, as will appear in the exposition of the following verses, the being principally concerned with Aaron in making the calf; and therefore those of the same tribe that joined them not were the more zealous and studious to purge themselves from the imputation of the crime, by going over to Moses at once, and showing themselves to be on the Lord's side.

Exodus 32:27 Ver. 27. And he said unto them, thus saith the Lord God of Israel,.... The following orders are given by Moses, not of himself the chief magistrate, and as the effect of heat and passion, but there were from the Lord, who was Israel's God and King; he had them expressly from him, or by an impulse on his spirit, or in such a way and manner that he knew it was of God, and this was his will: put every man his sword by his side; girt there, ready to be drawn upon order: and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp; not into the tents, where good men might be bemoaning the sin committed, but throughout the streets, where many were loitering, it being a holy day with the idolaters: and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour; who were idolaters; none were to be spared on account of relation, friendship, and acquaintance.

Exodus 32:28 Ver. 28. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses,.... They girded their swords by their sides, went through the camp, and slew their brethren, companions and neighbours, who were keeping holy day in honour of the idol: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men; the Vulgate Latin version reads 23,000, very wrongly; now these being chiefly, if not altogether, of the tribe of Levi, the brethren, companions, and neighbours of the Levites, that were the slayers, together with the after plagues that came upon them, Ex 32:35 account for the deficiency of males in this tribe, some few months after, when it was numbered; and

the number of them from one month old and upwards amounted but to 22,000, which was but a very small one in proportion to the other tribes, who generally, one with another, numbered 40,000 each, and none so few as 30,000 {r}; of this tribe Aaron was, and therefore used with severity, because of his concern in this sin; and even though it was the tribe of Moses, it was not spared. {r} See the Bishop of Clogher's Chronology of the Hebrew Bible, p. 360, 362. Exodus 32:29 Ver. 29. For Moses had said,.... To the Levites, when he first gave them their orders:consecrate yourselves today to the Lord; devote yourselves to his service, by obeying his orders, slaying those, or the heads of them, who have cast so much contempt upon him as to worship the golden calf in his room; and which would be as acceptable to him as the offerings were, by which Aaron and his sons were consecrated to the Lord; and as these Levites were consecrated to his service this day, on this account:[even] every man upon his son, and upon his brother; not sparing the nearest relation found in this idolatry, and for which the tribe of Levi is commended and blessed in the blessing of Moses, De 33:8 and as it follows,that he may bestow a blessing upon you this day; which was their being taken into the service of God to minister to the priests in the sanctuary, to bear the vessels of the Lord, and for their maintenance to have the tithes of the people: this day was, according to the Jewish writers {s}, the seventeenth of Tammuz, or June, on which day the Jews keep a fast upon this account. {s} Sedar Olam Rabba, c. 6. p. 18. Pirke Eliezer, c. 46. Exodus 32:30 Ver. 30. And it came to pass on the morrow,.... The eighteenth day of Tammuz it was, the same writers say, that Moses implored the mercy of God for Israel. Jarchi on Ex 32:11 says it was on the seventeenth day the tables were broke, on the eighteenth the calf was burnt, and on the nineteenth that Moses went up to intercede for them:that Moses said unto the people, ye have sinned a great sin; the sin of idolatry, see Ex 32:21 from whence it appears, that all that were guilty of it were not slain, perhaps only some of one tribe; and there was great reason to fear, that as wrath was gone forth it would not stop here, but others would fall a sacrifice to the divine displeasure; wherefore it is proposed by Moses to make application to the Lord on their behalf, that they might obtain mercy:and I will go up unto the Lord: on the top of Mount Sinai:peradventure I shall make atonement for your sin; not by any sacrifice offered, but by his prayers prevail with God to forgive their sin, and not punish any more for it: he had by his first prayer obtained of the Lord not to consume them off of the face of the earth, and utterly destroy them as a nation; but that he did not hinder but that resentment might be shown in a lesser degree, or by parts; as not 3000 men had been cut off, chiefly out of one tribe, if not altogether, the rest of the tribes might expect to be visited, according to the number of their delinquents. Exodus 32:31 Ver. 31. And Moses returned unto the Lord,.... On the mount where he was in the cloud:and said, oh, this people have sinned a great sin; which to following words explain; he confesses the same to God he had charged the people with in Ex 32:30:and have made them gods of gold; the golden calf, which they themselves called "Elohim", gods. Exodus 32:32 Ver. 32. Yet

now, if thou wilt forgive their sin,.... Of thy free grace, good will, and pleasure; it will redound to thy glory, men will praise thy name on account of it; these people will have great reason to be thankful, and will lie under great obligations to thee, to fear, serve, and glorify thee; and in particular it will be regarded by me as the highest favour that can be asked or granted:and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which thou hast written; not the book of the law, as Jarchi, written with the finger of God, the name of Moses was not written there; nor the book of the just, as the Targum of Jonathan, the list and catalogue of good men, that belonged to the visible church, called in after time "the writing of the house of Israel", Eze 13:9 but rather the book of life, either of this temporal life, and then it means no more than that he wished to die, even immediately by the hand of God, which seems to be countenanced by Nu 11:15 or else of eternal life, and is no other than the book of life of the Lamb, or God's predestination or choice of men in Christ to everlasting life, which is particular, personal, sure, and certain; and Moses asks for this, not as a thing either desirable or possible, but to express his great affection for this people, and his great concern for the glory of God; and rather than either should suffer, he chose, if it was possible, to be deprived of that eternal happiness he hoped for, and should enjoy. Exodus 32:33Ver. 33. And the Lord said unto Moses,.... In answer to his request:whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book; not that anyone that is really in the book of life is ever blotted out, or that anyone predestinated or ordained to eternal life ever perish: but some persons may think themselves, and they may seem to be written in that book, or to be among the number of God's elect, but are not, and turn out obstinate impenitent sinners, and live and die in impenitence and unbelief; when it will appear that their names were never written in it, which, is the same thing as to be blotted out of it, see Ps 69:28. Now by this answer the Lord does not absolutely refuse the request of Moses with respect to the people, though he does with regard to himself, and the blotting his name out of his book; and it is plain, by what follows, he meant to show mercy to the people, since he bids Moses go and lead them on towards Canaan, and promises an angel to go before them; though he reserves to himself a liberty to chastise this people for this sin, as he should have opportunity, along with others. Exodus 32:34Ver. 34. Therefore now go, lead the people [unto the] place of which I have spoken unto thee,.... That is, to the land of Canaan, which he had promised to their fathers and to them, and had directed Moses to bring them to:behold, mine angel shall go before thee: and not I, as Jarchi interprets it; not the Angel of the covenant, and of his presence, as in Ex 23:20 but a created angel, which, though a favour, was a lessening of the mercy before promised and granted; and which gave the people a great deal of concern, though Moses by his supplications got the former blessing restored, Ex 33:2:nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them; that is, when he should visit them in a way of correction for other sins, he would visit them in like manner for this sin, the worship of the golden calf; and so Jarchi well explains it,"when I visit upon them their iniquities, I will visit upon

them a little of this iniquity, with the rest of iniquities; and there is no punishment (adds he) comes upon Israel, in which there is not something of the punishment of the sin of the calf;"and the Jews have a saying {t}, that"there is not a generation in which there is not an ounce of the sin of the calf."{t} T. Hieros. Taanith, fol. 68. 3. Exodus 32:35Ver. 35. And the Lord plagued the people,.... That is, continued so to do at certain times, with the pestilence, or other calamities; for this seems not to refer, as some think, to the slaughter of the 3000 men: the reason follows,because they made the calf which Aaron made; that is, they provided him with materials to make it; they urged and solicited him to do it, and would not be easy without it, so that the making of it is ascribed to them; or they served it, as Onkelos; or bowed unto it, as Jonathan; with which agree the Syriac, Arabic, and Samaritan versions, which render it, they served, or worshipped, or sacrificed to the calf which Aaron made.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 33:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 33

This chapter informs us, that the Lord refusing to go with the people, only sending an angel with them, they are filled with concern, and troubled, [Ex 33:1](#). Moses upon this pitched the tabernacle without the camp, where everyone that sought the Lord went; Moses entered into it himself, and the Lord talked to him in a friendly manner in the cloudy pillar that stood at the door of it, and the people worshipped, every man at his own tent door; all which foreboded good, and tended to reconciliation, [Ex 33:7](#). Moses improved the opportunity, and entreats the presence of God to go with them, which was granted, [Ex 33:12](#) and that he might have a sight of the glory of God; and this is promised to pass before him, he being put into the cleft of the rock, [Ex 33:18](#).

Ver. 1. **And the Lord said unto Moses, depart, and go up hence,**.... Not from the place where Moses was, which was the top of the mount, but where the camp of Israel was, at the bottom of the mount; where they had lain encamped some time, but were now ordered to proceed on their journey:

thou, and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt; though his wrath was in some measure mitigated, and he had so far forgave their sin, that he would not cut them off from being a people; yet still he does not call them his people, or own that he brought them out of Egypt, as he does in the preface to the commands they had now broke, as if they were not under his care and conduct; but speaks of them in a different manner, as a people that Moses had brought out from thence, and whom he orders to go on with:

unto the land which I sware unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, unto thy seed will I give it: meaning the land of Canaan, which as he had promised with an oath to their fathers to give it to them, he would faithfully observe it, though they were unworthy of such a favour.

[Exodus 33:2](#)

Ver. 2. **And I will send an angel before thee,**.... Not the angel before promised, [Ex 23:20](#) the Angel of his presence, the eternal Word and Son of God, but a created angel; and so Aben Ezra observes, he does not say the Angel that was known, that his name was in him; though even this was to be looked upon as a favour, and showed

that he had not utterly cast them off:

and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite; who were now the inhabitants of the land, and these he promises drive out, to make way for their possession of it; and that "by his hand", as the Targum of Jonathan interprets it, by the hand of the angel. Only six nations are mentioned, though there were seven; the Girgashite is omitted, but added in the Septuagint version.

Exodus 33:3

Ver. 3. **Unto a land flowing with milk and honey**,.... Abounding with all the necessaries and good things of life, a description of the land of Canaan frequently made, see [Ex 3:8](#):

for I will not go up in the midst of thee; would not grant them his presence in so near, visible, and respectable a manner as he had before done, though he would not utterly forsake them: the tabernacle was before in the midst of the camp, that is, that which was erected until the large one, ordered to be made, was finished, but now it was removed without the camp, [Ex 33:7](#)

for thou art a stiffnecked people; See Gill on "Ex 32:9":

lest I consume them in the way; in the way to the land of Canaan, and so never get there; the meaning is, that the Lord being in the midst of them, their sin would be the more aggravated to be committed in his presence, before his face; and the glory of his majesty would require that immediate notice be taken of it, and just punishment inflicted; so that by this step God both consulted his own honour and their safety.

Exodus 33:4

Ver. 4. **And when the people heard these evil tidings**,.... That God would withdraw his gracious presence, and go not up with them himself, only send an angel with them; and especially this may respect what is threatened, [Ex 33:5](#) and had been said at this time:

they mourned; were inwardly and heartily grieved for their sin, whereby they had provoked the Lord to depart from them, and gave some outward and open tokens of it:

and no man did put on his ornaments; they used to wear at other times, their rings and jewels, which the princes and the chief among the people especially were wont to wear; and in common the people did not put on their best clothes, or what they usually wore, but clothed themselves in mournful habits, in sackcloth and ashes, or in some such like manner.

[Exodus 33:5](#)

Ver. 5. For the Lord had said to Moses,.... At the same time he had told it to the people:

say unto the children of Israel: Menachem, as quoted by Ainsworth, observes, that this is said in a way of mercy; for since their idolatry he had only called them the people of Moses, and the people, but now calls them by their beloved name, the children of Israel; but whether this was any hint of mercy and favour, is not very apparent by what follows:

ye [are] a stiffnecked people; obstinate and untractable,
See Gill on "Ex 32:9":

I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee; before he threatens them that he would not go up in the midst of them, that is, in a way of grace and mercy, to guide, protect, and defend them himself; and now that he would come up in the midst of them, but in a different manner, in a way of wrath, and to take vengeance on them for their sins; and the meaning is, either that should he do so but one moment it would be all over with them, or they would be utterly consumed; or this is threatened on condition, provided they did not repent of their sins, and humble themselves:

therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee; not their armour, as some, nor the clothes they wore at the festival for the golden calf, for this was long after that; but the clothes they usually wore, the best they had, with all their decorations and ornaments, and put on mournful habits as an outward token of their repentance and mourning for their sins, if they had any real concern: this shows that these words must have been said before; since the people on hearing the evil tidings had clothed themselves in a mournful habit, and did not put on their ornaments, [Ex 33:4](#):

that I may know what to do unto thee; which does not suppose ignorance or irresolution in God, but is said after the manner of men, that he should deal with them in proportion to their conduct and behaviour, and as that should outwardly appear.

Exodus 33:6

Ver. 6. **And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments**,.... Such as before described, and this they did,

by the Mount Horeb; before their departure from thence, and where they had been guilty of the idolatry: the words may be literally rendered, "from Mount Horeb" {u}; and Jonathan understands the preceding clause of something they put off which they received from thence; but the meaning is, that they went to some distance from Mount Horeb, and there stripped themselves to show their greater humiliation, and the sense they had of their unworthiness of being near to the Lord, or enjoying his presence.

{u} rhm "a monte", V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius; "procul a monte", Junius & Tremellius, Piscato.

Exodus 33:7

Ver. 7. **And Moses took the tabernacle**,.... Not that, the pattern of which he had been shown in the mount, for that was not as yet made, rather his own tabernacle or tent, [Ex 18:7](#) or one that was erected for worship before the large one was ordered, and while that was building; for it can hardly be thought they should have no place of worship for a whole year after they were come out of Egypt; though this might be not a place on purpose, or only erected for that use, but might be one of the apartments of Moses; who, besides what he had for the use and convenience of his family, had a special and peculiar one, hath on a religious account, where he and the people sometimes worshipped, and God met with them, and on a civil account, to hear and judge the causes of the people, and resolve their doubts, and remove their difficulties, and make inquiries of God for them:

and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp; 2000 cubits distant from it, as the Targum of Jonathan, and so Jarchi, which he endeavours to confirm from [Jos 3:4](#) and was what was afterwards called a sabbath day's journey: this was done partly that he might have the opportunity of conversing with God, and bringing about a thorough reconciliation between him and the people, who declared he would not go up in the midst of them; and partly that this might be a symbol to the people of the Lord's departure from the midst of them; that so they might be brought to a thorough humiliation for their sin, who might fear that he would not only stand at a distance, but entirely remove from them: it might be considered as a token of his displeasure

with them, and yet be a door of hope unto them; since he was not wholly gone from them, but might be sought unto by them as follows:

and called it the tabernacle of the congregation; as the great tabernacle was afterwards called, and as this might be before, though now renewed, to give the people some encouragement to resort here; because here he and they met together, both on civil and religious accounts, and God met with them:

and it came to pass, [that] everyone which sought the Lord: about any affair of moment and importance, to know his will, and to have instruction and direction what to do; or that sought to him for peace and reconciliation, for the pardon of their sins, and the acceptance of their persons, repenting of their sins, and confessing the same:

went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which [was] without the camp; these went out of the camp, from their tents there, to this; who were not the body of the people, but either such who had difficult matters to inquire about, or were seriously and heartily concerned for the evil they had committed, and for the removal of the divine Presence from them.

Exodus 33:8

Ver. 8. And it came to pass, when Moses went out of the tabernacle,.... For when he had pitched it he did not continue there; which shows it was not the tent or tabernacle he dwelt in, but whither he went to and fro, both to meet the Lord in it, and transact the affairs of the people, and especially the great affair now depending between God and them:

[that] all the people rose up: in reverence of him as their ruler, and the minister of God, and as their Mediator between God and them, though they had but lately thought and spoke very meanly and contemptibly of him, [Ex 32:1](#) see [Job 29:8](#)

and stood every man at his tent door; none offering to go in, nor to sit down until he was gone into the tabernacle, which was an instance of their respect to him:

and looked after Moses until he was gone into the tabernacle; kept their eye on him as long as they could see him, thereby expressing their esteem of him, signifying their desire that he would intercede for them, and wishing him success therein: the Targum of Jonathan interprets all this of the ungodly among them that looked after Moses with an evil eye.

Exodus 33:9

Ver. 9. **And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended,....** From the top of the mount in which Jehovah was:

and stood at the door of the tabernacle; where Moses was just entered, and in sight of the people, which was a token of grace and favour both to him and them:

and [the Lord] talked with Moses; not the cloudy pillar, but the Lord in it, as we rightly supply it: what he talked with him about is not said, very probably concerning the children of Israel, their conduct and behaviour, and what was his will further concerning them.

Exodus 33:10

Ver. 10. **And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle door,....** They being every man at his tent door; and this must be a pleasing sight to them, and give them some hope that God would be merciful to them, forgive their sin, and not depart from them:

and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man in his tent door; not Moses, nor the cloudy pillar, but the Lord in it; it was not a civil bow they made to Moses, and in respect to him, for he was gone into the tabernacle out of sight, but a religious adoration of the Lord in the pillar of cloud.

Exodus 33:11

Ver. 11. **And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face,....** Not by an angel, but he himself in person; not by a dream or vision, but apparently, in real visible appearance; not in dark speeches, but clearly in plain words, easy to be understood; and not by a voice from heaven at a distance, but mouth to mouth, being very near, as when on the mount, and now at the door of the tabernacle:

as a man speaketh unto his friend; freely, familiarly, plainly, cordially, openly, without any reserve or show of authority, or causing dread and fear; for he also spake to the children of Israel "face to face", but then it was out of the fire in a terrible manner which they could not bear, [De 5:4](#)

and he turned again into the camp; to acquaint the people, the heads and elders of them, what discourse he had with God, what success he had met with on their behalf, and how the Lord stood affected to them, or what was his will concerning them:

but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle; who is here described by his name, Joshua; by his descent, the son of Nun; by his relation to Moses, a servant of his, who waited on him wherever he went, when upon the mount and now at the tabernacle; and by his age, a young man, as he was in comparison of Moses, and is so called chiefly because he was his servant, it being usual to call servants young men, of whatsoever age; for Joshua, strictly speaking, could not be a young man in years; he was the general of the army at the battle with Amalek; and, according to Aben Ezra, was now fifty six years of age, which he collects from his living to the age of one hundred and ten years; now to fifty six add the forty years in the wilderness, seven years, in which he subdued the land of Canaan, and seven more in dividing it, as say their wise men, the sum is one hundred an ten years: and it not being easy to account for it, that Moses should depart alone, unaccompanied by Joshua, who always attended him, and no sufficient reason is given why he should stay behind in the tabernacle; as for private devotion, which this was not a place for; or for judging the causes of the people in the absence of Moses, which we never find he did or to guard the tabernacle, to be a watchman in it, or even at the head of a watch over it, which, as it seemed unnecessary, so was an employment too mean for him; the words therefore may be rendered as they are by some, and the rather, as there is an accent which makes a considerable stop on the word ren, translated a "young man" {w}, "and he turned again to the camp", and "his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man"; that is, along with him; they both returned to the camp, and then it follows, "he", i.e. the Lord, "departed not out of the tabernacle", but continued there; to whom Moses afterwards returned and had the following discourse: a learned man {x} thinks that the grand tabernacle is here meant, yet unfinished, though not the final erection of it; and that here is a dislocation in the history, and supposes that Moses having been forty days absent, found upon his return a good progress made in the work of the tabernacle, and the ornaments and utensils belonging thereunto: and as soon as the wood work of the tabernacle was finished, he ordered it to be put together; but because the tabernacle had neither a door to it, nor were the hangings of the outer court finished, therefore Joshua the servant of Moses, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle, but remained there to preserve it from being polluted: but it is a mistake of his that the tabernacle had not a door to it, and it is strange he should make it, when it is twice mentioned in the preceding verses; and since the pillar of cloud and the Lord in it were there, no man durst draw near to pollute it, so that there was no need of Joshua's being there to preserve it; and besides, it was after this Moses went up to the mount and stayed another forty days and forty nights, see [Ex 34:4](#).

{w} So Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Rivet. {x} Clayton's Chronology of the Hebrew Bible, p. 343.

Exodus 33:12

Ver. 12. **And Moses said unto the Lord**,.... Having returned from the camp to the tabernacle again;

see, thou sayest unto me, bring up this people: from hence to the land of Canaan, as in [Ex 33:1](#)

and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me; to guide and direct him, help and assist him, protect and defend him, and the people with him; he had signified something of this kind, but by some expressions, and by his present conduct, he was at a loss to know who was to go with him: he had told him that the uncreated Angel, in whom his name and he himself were, should go with them; but now it had been declared that he would not go up in the midst of them himself, but send an angel, a created one, but who that was he knew not; he thought he had reason to expect the pillar of the cloud and fire by day and night; but that had had so many motions that he could not be assured of the continuance of it:

yet thou hast said, I know thee by name; have a particular and special knowledge of thee, and distinguished thee from others, and have a personal affection for thee:

and thou hast also found grace in my sight: had an interest in his special favour and good will, was acceptable unto him, had received an abundance of spiritual grace, and many very extraordinary gifts from him, and had had many benefits bestowed on him, which were proofs of his being grateful and well pleasing to him.

Exodus 33:13

Ver. 13. **Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight**,.... Which he said, not as doubting whether he had or not, but as taking it for granted he had, and so argues from it, and improves his interest in it, in his pleading with God:

shew me now thy way: either the way which he himself would take, the way of his providence in bringing the children of Israel into the land of Canaan; or the way he would have him take, the way of his duty, how he would have him behave in

conducting them thither; unless he means the Messiah, Christ, the way to the heavenly Canaan, to whom he seems greatly to have respect in the following part of this chapter:

that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight; by which he might have a further evidence of his being acceptable to God, and having a share in his good will; as well as he would better know in what way grace is communicated, Christ being the way both of access into the grace of God, and of acceptance with him, and of the communication of grace from him:

and consider that this nation [is] thy people; though they had sinned against him in the manner they had done, they were a people he had chosen above all people to be his; he had made a covenant with them, and was their covenant God; he had redeemed them out of Egypt, and had called them from thence, and had wrought a great salvation for them, and had bestowed many peculiar favours upon them; and though for this their gross idolatry and sad apostasy from him they were unworthy of the relation, and he had thought fit not to call them his people, but the people, or the people of Moses, yet they still were his people, and he entreats he would consider the relation they stood in to him, and show mercy to them.

Exodus 33:14

Ver. 14. **And he said**,.... In answer to his request: my presence shall go [with thee]; or before thee, both with Moses and before the people; meaning the Angel of his presence he had before promised, the eternal Word and Son of God, who saved them, redeemed them, bore and carried them all the days of old: or "my faces shall go" {y}; all the three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit; there was Jehovah the Father, whose the Angel of his presence was; and there was Jehovah the Son, Christ, whom they tempted in the wilderness; and there was Jehovah the Holy Spirit, whom they vexed, see Isa 63:9 and I will give thee rest; not ease, and peace and tranquillity of mind, or a freedom from the fear of enemies, and all dangers by them, much less rest in the grave, before Israel should be brought into Canaan's land; but rather the promised land itself, which was "the rest" that was promised, and would be given, and was typical of that eternal rest which remains for the people of God in heaven, and is a pure gift; for this promise is not personal and peculiar to Moses, but belonged to all the people, to whom God would give the typical rest, see De 12:9. {y} wkly ynp "facies meae ibunt", Montanus, Vatablus. Exodus 33:15 Ver. 15. **And he said** unto him,.... Moses said unto the Lord: if thy presence go not [with me]; or with us, as it may be as well supplied, and which agrees with what follows: carry us not up hence; from the mount to the land of Canaan; though God had promised his presence, which was the thing requested, Moses could not forbear expressing himself after this

manner, to show the high esteem he had of this blessing, and how worthless and insignificant everything else was without it; that even Canaan, the land of rest promised, was nothing in comparison of it: it is not much matter where we are, or what we have, if God is not with us; but if he grants his presence, the greatest hardships in a wilderness are made easy, and difficulties are got through with pleasure; though some read the words in the preceding verse by way of interrogation, "should my face" or "presence go", and "should it give thee rest" {z}? as carrying in it a kind of denial, which makes Moses here more urgent for it, and such a version those words seem to require. {z} "An facies mea iret et quietem daret tibi?" Noldius, p. 243. so Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. Exodus 33:16Ver. 16. For wherein shall it be known here,.... At Sinai, among the mountains in the wilderness:that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight: were acceptable to him, highly esteemed by him, and had received peculiar favours from him; what evidence would there be of this? how would it appear to others? what knowledge could they have of it?[is it] not in that thou goest with us? in such a grand majestic manner, and so visible as in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night: this is a full proof, and a strong and convincing argument, even to a demonstration, that they were a special and peculiar people, the favourites of God, highly esteemed and honoured by him; but should this be discontinued, as seemed to be threatened, there would be nothing to demonstrate that they had found more grace and favour than other people; but this being the case,so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people [that are] upon the face of the earth; distinguished by this favour from them, and that in a very wonderful and marvellous manner, as the word signifies; and so some render it, "marvellously separated" {a}; for the pillar of cloud and fire was a very marvellous thing, and distinguished the people of Israel from all others in a surprising manner, none having been ever favoured in the like manner. {a} wnylpn "marvellously separated", Ainsworth. Exodus 33:17Ver. 17. And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken,.... Or asked for, namely, go with them himself in this amazing and distinguished manner, in the pillar of the cloud and fire; this he would do as well as show him his way and his works, and indeed all this he did by granting that:for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name; he owns the truth of the thing, on which Moses had formed his plan, and by granting his request gave a fresh proof and evidence of it; and what can be a greater blessing than to partake of the special grace, favour, and good will of God, and to be particularly and personally known to him, with such a knowledge as has connected with it the strongest affection and highest esteem? Exodus 33:18Ver. 18. And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. Not any visible lustre, splendour, and brightness, as a symbol of the divine Presence, that he had seen, Ex 16:7 nor the glorious essence of God, as Maimonides {b}, which is invisible and cannot be seen, and of which Moses could not be ignorant; nor the glory of the heavenly state, which also he must know he could not see until he came thither; but he seems to mean some visible glorious representation of God, such

as he had never seen, though he had been with him so long on the mount in the cloud, and heard his voice, and saw some appearances of brightness and glory, yet not in any form that he could frame any idea of; perhaps he may mean the Angel of God's presence, called his face, the promised Messiah and glorious Redeemer and Saviour, in whom there is such a bright display of the glory of the divine perfections; yea, is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; and this favour was granted him, with some proper limitations and restrictions; for though this request was, no doubt, sincere and upright, it might be attended with frailty and weakness; yet it is not utterly denied, but with some explanation is allowed, and perhaps was the highest favour ever granted to any before the incarnation of our Lord, at least in so full and glorious a manner as this was; Moses having by his suit obtained much, wants more and is emboldened to ask it, and in a good measure had it, as the following words show. {b} Yesude Hatorah, c. 1. sect. 10. Exodus 33:19 Ver. 19. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee,.... Which is his glory; the glory of the Lord lies in his goodness, and that appears in the works of his hands, in the methods of his providence, especially in the distribution of his sovereign grace and mercy, and particularly in his pardoning grace and mercy, through the blood of Christ; for as it is "the glory" of a man "to pass over a transgression", Pr 19:11 much more it is the glory of God, of which this goodness is afterwards interpreted; and may be understood of Christ himself, who is the goodness of God itself, is not only good, but the Lord's good One, emphatically good; as he is called his holy One, so his good One; because all his goodness is laid up in him, is prevented and filled as Mediator, with the blessings of his goodness; all are proclaimed in him, displayed through him, and communicated by him; and he is that glorious Personage that Moses might be desirous of having a view of, and was favoured with; however, with a view of the divine goodness, as it is conspicuous in him, in what he is, and has done for his people; for God has shown forth the exceeding riches of his grace and goodness in him: and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee: his name and his nature, his perfections, and the glory of them, as displayed in Christ; or when he is about to pass, or while he is passing by, lest he should pass by unobserved, I will proclaim aloud and give thee notice that he is now passing by thee, whose name is Jehovah, and whose nature, glory, and goodness, are as follow: and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy: signifying that notwithstanding the children of Israel had sinned against him in such a manner as they had, yet he should show favour, grace, and mercy to them, in pardoning their sins; and it should be distributed, not according to any merits of theirs, but according to his sovereign will and pleasure, and not to all, but to whomsoever he thought fit; and in this would be seen his glory: and so it is with respect to grace and mercy, as displayed in Christ to sinful men; it is not in proportion to their deserts, but according to the purpose and good will of God, and that not unto all, but unto some whom he has appointed, not unto wrath, but unto salvation by Jesus Christ, and which is to the glory

of his grace; and the more enlarged view men have of this, the more clearly and fully does the goodness and glory of God pass before them. Exodus 33:20 Ver. 20. And he said, thou canst not see my face,.... Meaning not his form, his essence, his very nature, and the glory of it, that Moses must know he could never see; but the brightest displays of his grace and goodness in Christ, the fullest discoveries of it, which are too much for man, in the present state of things, to have, who sees in part, and but through a glass darkly, not face to face, or in the most complete and perfect manner; it is but a small part and portion of God, and of his ways and works, as of creation and providence, so more especially of grace, salvation, and redemption by Jesus Christ, that is known of him; the things of the Gospel in their full perfection are what eye has not seen; and particularly were more hidden and unseen under the legal dispensation; this face was covered with types and shadows, and dark representations of things; though, in comparison of that state, we now, with open face, behold the glory of the Lord, yet still it is through a glass darkly, and we have not the clear and full view of things as will be hereafter: for there shall no man see me and live: if there was to be such a revelation made of the grace and goodness, and glory of God in Christ, as it really is in itself, it would be too much for mortals in the present state to bear; it would break their earthen vessels in pieces; the full discovery therefore is reserved to a future state, when these things will be seen as they are, and men will be in a condition to receive them; otherwise we find that men have, in a sense, seen the face of God in this life, and have lived; though many, and even good men, have been possessed with such a notion, that if a man saw God he must die, see Ge 32:30. Exodus 33:21 Ver. 21. And the Lord said, behold, [there is] a place by me,.... Near him, not in or by the tabernacle, where it may be the pillar of cloud now was, as it had been, Ex 33:9 but upon the rock, where it had been for many days, and near to which there was a fit place for Moses to be in, and have that view of the goodness and glory of God he would favour him with: and thou shall stand upon a rock; in Horeb, typical of Christ the rock, the rock of Israel, and the rock of ages, the rock of refuge, salvation, and strength; comparable to one for shelter, solidity, firmness, strength, and duration; and happy are they who stand upon this rock; they are safe and secure, they stand on high, and have noble prospects of the perfections of God, and of the riches of his grace and goodness, see Ps 50:2. Exodus 33:22 Ver. 22. And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by,.... The displays of his grace and goodness are made: that I will put thee in a clift of the rock; in one of the clefts, made by smiting it, through which the waters gushed out for the relief of the Israelites, and their flocks: and we are told {c}, that to this day, on the summit of Mount Sinai, by the Arabians called Gibel el Mousa, or the mountain of Moses, is perceived a large chasm in the rock, said to be the cave where Moses hid himself from God, when the glory of the Lord passed before him. Now this cleft may be an emblem of Christ, as crucified, smitten, wounded and slain; who was smitten by the law and justice of God, as this rock was smitten by the rod of Moses: and had gashes and wounds made in him like the clefts

of a rock, being pierced with the nails and spear: and in these clefts of the rock saints dwell by faith, So 2:14:and will cover thee with my hand; with his cloud, as Ben Melech, and so may denote the cloudiness, obscurity, and darkness of the legal dispensation: but here it seems to denote imperfection, not being able to bear the full sight of the divine glory, and which angels themselves cannot bear, but cover their faces; and also the danger of being consumed, were it not that saints are in Christ, and covered and secured in him, otherwise God is a consuming fire:while I pass by thee; or his glory, the glory of all his perfections, wisdom, holiness, justice, power, and faithfulness, and especially of his grace, mercy, and goodness in Christ. {c} Egmont and Heyman's Travels, vol. 2. p. 167. see a Journal from Cairo, &c. p. 28, 29. Ed. 2. Exodus 33:23Ver. 23. And I will take away mine hand,.... As being covered with the hand may signify the obscurity of the former dispensation, the taking of it away may denote a more clear revelation of the grace and goodness of God in Christ, and so of the glory of it under the Gospel dispensation; and yet what is seen in this, in comparison of the reality of things as they are, or of the heavenly state, are but as next expressed:and thou shalt see my back parts; which some understand of the humanity of Christ, and his sufferings in it, sometimes expressed by his heel, and the bruising of it, Ge 3:15 or else the works of God in creation, by which the invisible things of God are seen, and which give a knowledge of him "a posteriori"; and so Maimonides {d} interprets the phrase, which follow me, flow from my will, i.e. all my creatures: or rather it denotes the imperfect knowledge of God in the present state, even as revealed in Christ, in whom there are the clearest and brightest displays of his glory; yet this, in comparison of the beatific sight of him, is but like seeing a man that is gone by, whose back is only to be seen:but my face shall not be seen; in the present state, the face of God, that is, his favour, communion with him, and the light of his countenance, are to be sought for, and may be enjoyed; the glory of himself is to be seen in the face or person of Christ, and the glory of that face or person is to be seen in the glass of the Gospel, but at present imperfectly; God in Christ as he is, the fullest and brightest displays of his glory, grace, and goodness, are reserved to another state, see 1Co 13:9 or it may regard the divine nature of Christ, which could not be seen by Moses, but his back parts, or human; Christ as clothed with flesh might, and would be seen by him, as he was seen by him on the mount, Mt 17:3. {d} Moreh Nevochim, par. 1. c. 38.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 34:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 34

In this chapter Moses has orders to hew two tables of stone, that God might write on them the ten commands, and bring them up with him to the mount, [Ex 34:1](#) where the Lord proclaimed his name, and caused his glory and his goodness to pass before him, [Ex 34:5](#) when Moses took this favourable opportunity that offered to pray for the people, that God would forgive their sin, and go along with them, [Ex 34:8](#) upon which he made a covenant with them, which on his part was to do wonders for them, and drive out the inhabitants of Canaan before them; and on their part, that they should have no confederacy and communion with these nations, and shun their idolatry, and everything that might lead unto it, [Ex 34:10](#) and he repeated several laws before given, and urged the observance of them, which Moses was to acquaint the people with, [Ex 34:18](#) and after a stay of forty days and forty nights on the mount, he came down with the two tables of the law; and the skin of his face shone so bright, that the people of Israel were afraid to come nigh him, and therefore he put a vail over his face while he conversed with them, [Ex 34:28](#).

Ver. 1. **And the Lord said unto Moses,**.... Out of the cloudy pillar, at the door of the tabernacle, where he had been conversing with him in the most friendly manner, as related in the preceding chapter:

hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first; of the same form, and of the same dimensions, and it may be of the same sort of stone, which perhaps was marble, there being great plenty of that kind on Mount Sinai. Now Moses being ordered to hew these tables, whereas the former were the work of God himself, as well as the writing, shows that the law was to be the ministration of Moses, and be ordained in the hand of him as a mediator, who had been praying and interceding for the people; and as a token of the reconciliation made, the tables were to be renewed, yet with some difference, that there might be some remembrance of their crime, and of their loss by it, not having the law on tables of stone, which were the work of God, but which were the work of man:

and I will write upon [these] tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest; the writing of these was by the Lord himself, as the former, shows that the law itself was of God, though the tables were hewn by Moses, and that he would have it known and observed as such; and the same being written on these tables, as on the

former, shows the unchangeableness of the law of God, as given to the people of Israel, that he would have nothing added to it, or taken from it; and the writing of it over again may have respect to the reinscribing it on the hearts of his people in regeneration, according to the tenor of the new covenant: the phrase, "which thou brakest", is not used as expressing any displeasure at Moses for that act of his, but to describe the former tables; and the breaking of them might not be the effect of passion, at least of any criminal passion, but of zeal for the glory of God, and the honour of his law, which was broken by the Israelites, and therefore unworthy of it; and might be according to the counsel of the divine will, and the secret direction of his providence.

Exodus 34:2

Ver. 2. **And be ready in the morning**,.... This was, according to the Jewish chronology {e}, on the twenty eighth day of the month Ab or July:

and come up in the morning unto Mount Sinai; the same mount where he had been before:

and present thyself there to me on the top of the mount; where the pillar of cloud removed and stood, and near it Moses was to stand and wait to hear what would be said unto him, and to see what would be made to pass before him.

{e} Seder Olam Rabba, c. 6. p. 19.

Exodus 34:3

Ver. 3. **And no man shall come up with thee**,.... Before, Aaron and his two sons, and the seventy elders of Israel, went up with Moses, though they did not go so near the Lord as he did; but now having sinned in the matter of the golden calf, though a reconciliation was made, they were not allowed to go with him, nor even Joshua his servant, though he had no concern in the sin; Moses must be alone, that the ministration of the law might be by him only, and in order to receive a peculiar favour in answer to his request:

neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount; in any part of it, as Joshua was before in some part of it, even all the while that Moses was there; but now not a single person must be seen anywhere, not only because of the giving of the law to Moses, but because of the display of the divine glory, which was to be made particularly to

him:

neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount; or over against it, or rather "near" it {f}; which was ordered, not so much on the account of the flocks themselves, who were not capable of any moral guilt; nor that they might not come to any hurt, since they were to be stoned or thrust through with a dart if they touched it, which order it is highly probable was in force as before; but on the account of their keepers, that there might be none of them on the spot, or near, to observe what passed; and chiefly this was said to command fear and reverence in the minds of the people, while this solemn affair was transacting between God and Moses, and to check all curiosity in them.

{f} awhh rhh lwm la plhsion tou orouv, Sept. "prope montem illum", Noldius, p. 80.

Exodus 34:4

Ver. 4. And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first,.... Which may be an emblem of the ministry of men, which God makes use of in hewing of his people, and bringing them to a sense of their sins, the breach of his law, and repentance for them, Ho 6:5:

and Moses rose up early in the morning: which, according to the Jews {g}, was the twenty ninth of Ab or July, which showed his ready and cheerful obedience to the divine will, and the quick dispatch he had made in hewing the tables; which whether he did with his own hands only, or made use of others whom he directed, is not very material; though the phrase "hew thee", or "hew unto thee", seems as if he were to do it himself, and not another:

and went up unto Mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him; which was the third time of his going there, and every time he continued forty days and forty nights, as Aben Ezra observes, see De 9:18:

and took in his hand the two tables of stone; which could not be very thick and heavy to carry in one hand up a mountain, but must be a sort of marble slab or slate: at this same time an ark was ordered to be made, and was made, to put the tables into, which was a type of Christ, the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness, De 10:1.

{g} Seder Olam Rabba, c. 6. p. 19.

Exodus 34:5

Ver. 5. **And the Lord descended in the cloud,**.... The same with the cloudy pillar, which was now gone up from the door of the tabernacle, and was on high in the air over the mount, and on which the Lord now descended in it, as he had before, [Ex 19:9](#):

and stood with him there; not Moses stood with the Lord, as the Vulgate Latin version; but the Lord, or the cloud in which the Lord was, stood near to Moses:

and proclaimed the name of the Lord: Jehovah declared with a loud voice out of the cloud, that the Lord was there; the Targum of Jonathan is,

"and Moses called on or in the name of the Word of the Lord;"

and so the Vulgate Latin version refers it to Moses, and renders the words, "calling on the name of the Lord"; but the following verse clearly shows that it must be understood of the Lord, and not of Moses.

Exodus 34:6

Ver. 6. **And the Lord passed by before him,**.... Or caused his Shechinah, his divine Majesty, and the glory of it, to pass before him, as the Targums; his glory and goodness, which he had promised should pass before him, [Ex 33:19](#) and it is but a transient passing view the greatest of men, God's peculiar favourites, have of him in this life:

and proclaimed, the Lord, the Lord God; the Jerusalem Targum wrongly paraphrases the words as a prayer of Moses thus, "and Moses prayed, and said, O Lord, Lord"; and so the Vulgate Latin version; but it is quite clear, and beyond all doubt, from [Nu 14:17](#) that what follow are the words of God, and not of Moses: the sense is, that the Lord, as he passed by Moses, to raise and fix his attention, declared it was Jehovah that passed by; which is repeated the more to excite his attention, and is the name by which he had made himself known to Moses, even when he sent him into Egypt; for "I am that I am" is an explanation of this name, see [Ex 3:14](#) and the word "El", translated "God", signifies mighty and powerful, and is true of all the three divine Persons, to whom respect may be had in the use of these three words. What is proclaimed or declared concerning God is, that he is

merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; first

"merciful", and he is so in the most tender and affectionate manner; he is rich and plenteous in mercy, freely giving it, delights in bestowing it, constantly shows it to his people; it is manifested and displayed in Christ, the mercy seat; and it lays a foundation for faith and hope, and is the spring of all good things in time, and to eternity: and he is also "gracious", good and kind to men, without any merit or desert of theirs, but bestows good things on them freely, of his own free grace, favour, and good will, as appears by various acts of his; in the eternal choice of them to everlasting happiness; in providing a Saviour for them, and giving all grace and spiritual blessings to them in him; by giving Christ to them, and for them, justifying them freely by his righteousness, pardoning their sins according to the riches of his grace, regenerating, calling, preserving, and saving them by it: likewise "longsuffering"; both towards wicked men, the vessels of wrath, by whom his patience and longsuffering are abused and despised; and towards his elect, on whom he waits to be gracious, not willing that any of them should perish, but all be brought to repentance; and his longsuffering is their salvation: and it follows, "abundant in goodness and truth"; in providential goodness to all men; in special goodness to his chosen people, which he has laid up, and wrought out for them, and shown them in Christ; in his truth and faithfulness, in fulfilling his promises, both with respect to the mission of his Son into the world, to be the Saviour of it, and with respect to all other things promised, whether relating to this life, or that to come, to grace or glory; he never suffers his truth and faithfulness to fail; his promises are all yea and amen in Christ.

[Exodus 34:7](#)

Ver. 7. **Keeping mercy for thousands**,.... In his own heart, in his purposes and decrees, in his counsels and covenant, in his Son, with whom he keeps it for ever, and for all in him, [Ps 89:28](#) and they are many who are ordained to eternal life, for whom Christ gave his life a ransom, and for whom his blood was shed for the remission of their sins; and whom he justifies by his knowledge, and at last brings to glory as the great Captain of their salvation; these are even a number which no man can number. All the Targums render it to a thousand generations; and Jarchi interprets of two thousand generations. The first letter in the word, rendered "keeping", is longer than is usual, in the Hebrew text; which, according to the Jews {h}, denotes the largeness of the grace of God, its great extent and long continuance:

forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin; the word used signifies a lifting it up, and taking it away: thus Jehovah has taken it from the sinner, and put it on his Son, who has borne it, and made satisfaction for it; and in so doing has taken it quite away, so as to be seen no more; and, through the application of his blood to the conscience

of a sinner, it is taken away from thence, and removed as far as the east is from the west; from whence it appears, that it is in Christ, and for his sake, that God forgives sin, even through his blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and satisfaction; and this forgiveness is of all sin, of all sorts of sin, original or actual, greater or lesser, public or private, open or secret, of omission or commission, of heart, lip, and life. The Jews sometimes distinguish these three words; "iniquity", they say, signifies sins through pride and presumption; "transgression" intends rebellions against God; and "sin", what is committed through error and mistake {i}; and much to this sense is Jarchi's interpretation of these words; they no doubt include all manner of sin, which God for Christ's sake forgives:

and will by no means clear [the guilty]; without a full and proper satisfaction to justice; which is provided in Christ, whom God has set forth to be the propitiation for sin, to declare his righteousness, that he might appear to be just, while he justifies and pardons those that believe in Jesus; otherwise all the world are guilty before God, and none would be cleared; but those for whom satisfaction is made, and a righteousness wrought out, they are cleared, acquitted, and discharged, and they only: or "though he will by no means let it go unpunished" {k}; that is, sin, expressed by the several words preceding; and so to this purpose is this phrase translated in [Jer 30:11](#) and the meaning is, that though God pardons sin, all manner of sin, and so displays his grace and mercy, yet he takes care of the honour of his justice, and never suffers any sin to go unpunished, either on the sinner, or on the surety. Pardon of sin always proceeds upon the redemption that is through the blood of Christ, and is a branch of it, see [Ro 3:24](#). Some understand these words as relating not to the justice, but to the mercy and goodness of God; and render the words, either "in extirpating he will not extirpate", as Maimonides {l}; and as Jonathan translates the same phrase in [Jer 30:11](#) "in destroying I will not destroy"; and so De Dieu here, "in emptying he will not empty", or destroy; and this sense is thought to be most agreeable to the prayer of Moses, and the promise of God, that his goodness and glory should pass before him, to which the other sense seems contrary; but the justice of God is as much his glory, and in it lies his goodness, as well as his grace and mercy; besides, the following words cannot be thought to be so expressive of the grace, and mercy, and goodness of God, but of his punitive justice, and so the objection would still remain:

visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the childrens' children, unto the third and to the fourth [generation]; See Gill on "Ex 20:5".

{h} Vid. Buxtorf. Tiberiad. c. 14. p. 38. {i} Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Yoma, c. 4. sect. 2. {k} hqny al hqnw "et impunita minime dimittens", Tigurine version; "et non exercens impunitatem", Coccei Lexic. in voce hqn. {l} Moreh Nevochim, par. 1. c. 54.

Exodus 34:8

Ver. 8. **And Moses made haste**,.... Perceiving the voice ceased, and the Lord was passing on, lest he should be gone, and he lose the favourable opportunity he had:

and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped; threw himself prostrate upon it, and in the most humble manner put up his requests to God, which are expressed in the following verse; he gladly laid hold on this opportunity to use his interest with God for the people of Israel, and to improve the proclamation of grace and mercy, in the forgiveness of sins, now made; which encouraged his faith and hope to draw nigh with a holy boldness, and use freedom with him, and yet with an awe of his majesty, with reverence and godly fear.

Exodus 34:9

Ver. 9. **And he said, if now I have found grace in thy sight**,.... Or "seeing now", for he could have no doubt upon his mind but that he had found grace and favour in the sight of God, since he had caused his goodness and glory to pass before him, and made such a proclamation of his grace and mercy to him; but he takes it for granted, and improves it, and argues upon it, as follows:

O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go amongst us; as the Lord had signified as if he would not go among them, but leave them to the conduct of a created angel; and Moses had before prayed that his presence or face might go with them, [Ex 33:3](#) and now having some fresh tokens of the favour and good will of God towards him, renews his request with great earnestness and importunity, entreating the Lord Jehovah the Father, that Moses's Lord Jehovah the Son, the Angel of God's presence, in whom his name was, might go with them, as he had said he should:

for it is a stiffnecked people; and therefore have need of such an one to be with them, to rule and govern them, to restrain and keep them within due bounds; or "though {m} it is a stiffnecked people"; for this is the reason given by the Lord why he would not go among them, [Ex 33:3](#) wherefore Moses prays that he would go, notwithstanding this; he owns the character of them was just, yet humbly prays that God would nevertheless vouchsafe his presence:

and pardon our iniquity, and our sin; which he had the greater reason to hope he

would, since he had just proclaimed his name, a God pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin; and, the more to gain his suit, makes himself a party concerned, calling the sin committed, "our iniquity, and our sin"; even his among the rest, who had found grace in the sight of God, and therefore entreats others might also, since they were all sinners, and there was forgiveness with him:

and take us for thine inheritance; to possess and enjoy, protect and defend, cultivate and improve, keep and preserve for ever.

{m} Quamvis, Piscator, Patrick; so R. Marinus in Aben Ezra; and some in Abendana.

Exodus 34:10

Ver. 10. **And he said, behold, I will make a covenant,**.... Or renew the covenant before made the people had broke; which on his part was, that he would, as Moses had entreated, forgive the sin of the people, go along with them, and introduce them into the land of Canaan, and drive out the inhabitants of it before them; and, on their part, that they should avoid idolatry, and everything that led unto it, particularly making covenants, and entering into alliances with the idolatrous nations cast out:

before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation; both in their passage through the wilderness, and entrance into Canaan's land, and the conquest of that; such as the earth opening its mouth and swallowing alive Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and was a new thing God created; the smiting of the rock at Kadesh, from whence flowed waters abundantly; the healing of such as were bit by fiery serpents through looking at a serpent of brass; Balaam's ass speaking, and reproving the madness of the prophet; the division of the waters of Jordan; the fall of the walls of Jericho at the sound of rams' horns; the sun and moon standing still, until the Lord had avenged himself of his enemies:

and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of the Lord; for it should be visible, as the above things were, and plainly appear to be the Lord's doing, and not man's, being above the power of any created being to perform:

for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee; Aben Ezra restrains this to Moses's person, and interprets this of the wonderful shining of the skin of his face, when he came down from the mount, which made the children of Israel afraid to come nigh him; and of his vigorous constitution at the time of his death, when his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated, contrary to the nature of ancient persons: but it is better to understand it of the ministry of Moses, and of the awful things that God

would do by him; or rather of the people of Israel, among whom, and for whose sake, God would do such things as should cause a panic among the nations all around them; particularly what he did for them to Og king of Bashan, and Sihon king of the Amorites, on account of which terror fell, as on the king of Moab, so on the inhabitants of Canaan; see [Nu 21:33](#) [Jos 2:9](#).

[Exodus 34:11](#)

Ver. 11. **Observe thou that which I command thee this day**,.... Which words are either said to Moses personally, as Aben Ezra thinks, as a direction to him to observe what had been said to him, and declare them to the children of Israel; or rather to the children of Israel, and respect the commands which are afterwards delivered out to be observed by them in the following verses; and what is expressed in the next clause is such as was not done by the ministry of Moses, nor in his time:

behold, I drive out before thee; not before Moses, but the people of Israel,

the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite; six nations are only mentioned, though there were seven, the Girgashites being omitted, because either they left the land before, as some think, or because they at once submitted; they are added in the Septuagint version.

[Exodus 34:12](#)

Ver. 12. **Take heed to thyself**,.... This is said not to Moses, but to the people of Israel, as a caution to them when they should enter the land of Canaan, and possess it:

lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest: enter into a league and alliance, to live friendly and amicably, and support and assist each other against the common enemy; whereas they were to smite the seven nations and destroy them, and show them no mercy, [De 7:1](#)

lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee; be the means of drawing them into the same sinful practices with themselves, especially into idolatrous ones, and so of bringing ruin and destruction on them.

[Exodus 34:13](#)

Ver. 13. **But ye shall destroy their altars**,.... On which they had sacrificed to their idols; since, if they were allowed to continue, they might be temptations to offer sacrifice thereon, contrary to the command of God:

break their images: of gold or silver, wood or stone, which they made for themselves, and worshipped as deities; seeing if these continued, the sight of them might lead to the worship of them, and so bring under the divine displeasure, as a breach of the command of God given them:

and cut down their groves; which were clusters of trees, where they had their temples and their idols, and did service to them, and where, besides idolatry, many impurities were committed. Such places were originally used by good men for devotion, being shady and solitary, but when abused to superstitious and idolatrous uses, were forbidden. It is said {n}, the word for "grove" is general, and includes every tree they serve, or plant, for an idol. {n} R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 72. 1. Exodus 34:14 Ver. 14. For thou shalt worship no other god,.... Than the Lord their God, the one only living and true God, which was the first command given to the people of Israel, and binding upon all men: for the Lord whose name is Jealous, [is] a jealous God; his name and nature answer to one another; he admits of no rival or competitor in worship; he will not give his glory to another god, or one so called, nor his praise to graven images; and in this he is distinguished from all nominal and fictitious gods, who have many joined with them, and are rivals of them, which gives them no concern, because insensible; but it is otherwise with the Lord, who knows the dishonour done him, and resents it, and is as jealous of any worship being given to another, as the husband is of the honour of his marriage bed; for idolatry is spiritual adultery, as is suggested in the following verse. Exodus 34:15 Ver. 15. Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land,.... A marriage covenant, taking their daughters in marriage to their sons, and "vice versa", as the following words show; here the caution is to be understood and the words supplied from Ex 34:12 and inserted and connected thus, "take heed to thyself, lest thou make", &c. and they go a whoring after their gods; that is, the inhabitants of the land, and particularly those with whom the Israelites made a covenant, and entered into a marriage relation with, and perhaps on this condition, that they would abstain from idolatry; and yet, contrary to the obligation they laid themselves under, lust after their idols, and commit spiritual fornication or adultery with them, which is explained by the next clause: and do sacrifice unto their gods; such as the first institutors of their idolatry enjoined, and their ancestors had observed, and were according to the rites and customs of the country: and [one] call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; invite to eat of what remained, that was offered to the idol: hence it appears, that having feasts at sacrifices, and eating things offered to idols in a festival way, are very ancient practices; see 1Co 10:27. Exodus 34:16 Ver. 16. And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons,.... That is, marry them to them, which

explains what is meant by making a covenant with them, entering into such a near relation, and joining families, and thus intermixing with one another; and their daughters go a whoring after their gods; the worship of whom they have been trained up in from their infancy, and therefore hanker after them, and commit whoredom in a spiritual sense with them; and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods; by the means of tempting and drawing them into idolatrous practices, as the wives of Solomon were a snare to him. Exodus 34:17 Ver. 17. Thou shalt make thee no molten gods. Made of a melted liquid, whether gold, or silver, or brass, poured into a mould; and though graven images are not mentioned, they are included, a part being put for the whole, as appears not only from the injunction to break images in general, whether graven or molten, Ex 34:13 but from the second command, which expressly forbids the making and worshipping of them; but "molten" ones are particularly mentioned, because it is probable they were chiefly such the Canaanites worshipped, and especially, because the calf the Israelites had lately made and worshipped was a molten one. Exodus 34:18 Ver. 18. The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep,.... Which was instituted at the time of their coming out of Egypt, and on that account, and then observed, Ex 12:15 and afterwards repeated, and the month expressed in which they were to keep it, and the reason of it, as it here follows, See Gill on "Ex 13:15". Exodus 34:19 Ver. 19. All that openeth the matrix is mine,.... Or "the womb", and therefore to be sanctified, and set apart for his use: this also was declared, and the law concerning it given, at the time of their coming out of Egypt, and here repeated, See Gill on "Ex 13:2", See Gill on "Ex 13:12". Exodus 34:20 Ver. 20. Every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem,.... This goes along with the former, See Gill on "Ex 13:13": and none shall appear before me empty; at the grand festivals, the passover, pentecost, and tabernacles, See Gill on "Ex 13:15". Exodus 34:21 Ver. 21. Six days shalt thou work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest,.... This is the law of the seventh day sabbath, which is after repeated, to fix it in the minds and memories of the people, see Ex 20:10 and here it is added, which has not been mentioned before: in earing and in harvest thou shalt rest; that is, in the time of ploughing, and in the time of reaping and gathering in the harvest, which are both very busy seasons; the rest of the sabbath was not to be violated; such sort of works, though they might require haste and expedition, yet the sabbath was not to be broken on account of them: this is the common sense of the law, as it is understood; but Maimonides {o} gives another sense from their doctors, who say, it is forbidden to plough in the sixth year what cannot be reaped but in the seventh; and so likewise that it is forbidden to reap on the seventh year, that of which profit may be had on the eighth year, and this is founded on what the Scripture says, Ex 34:21 "in earing", &c. and they say, that here ploughing and harvest are not to be understood of the seventh day, because this is included in the general rule, "thou shalt not do any work"--they say, of that which is ploughed, whose reaping or harvest is forbidden, is the ploughing at the evening of the seventh year, and at the going out of the seventh; and know this, that the evening of

the seventh is the sixth year, and the going out of the seventh is the eighth year, and so Jarchi on the text observes, that some of their Rabbins say, this is to be understood of the ploughing of the seventh year, the seventh year entering, and the harvest of the seventh year, at the going out of it; so that as there is a seventh day of rest, there is a year in which ploughing and harvest are forbidden; but there are others, he says, who say the text speaks only of the sabbath. {o} In Misn. Sheviith, c. 14. sect. 1. Exodus 34:22Ver. 22. And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks,.... The feast of Pentecost, called the feast of weeks, because seven sabbaths or weeks, or fifty days, were to be reckoned from the day in the passover feast, on which the sheaf of the wave offering was brought, Le 23:15 and which was also called the feast of the first fruits of wheat harvest, to distinguish it from the barley harvest, at the time of the passover, when a sheaf of barley was the wave offering to the Lord; but at this two loaves or cakes of fine wheaten flour were brought as the first fruits of the wheat harvest, see Le 23:17and the feast of ingathering at the year's end; which was the feast of tabernacles, called the feast of ingathering, because at this time all the fruits of the earth, the corn, wine, and oil, and all others were gathered in; and this was at the close of the old year, and at the beginning of the new, according to the ancient account, which made Tisri or September the first month in the year;See Gill on "Ex 23:16". Exodus 34:23Ver. 23. Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear before the Lord God,.... At the three above mentioned feasts,See Gill on "Ex 23:17" here it is added,the God of Israel; who had chosen them to be his special people, had redeemed them out of Egypt, and done great things for them since; had made a covenant with them, and had now renewed that covenant with them, and was their covenant God, and they his people, and so were under great obligations to present themselves unto him at the times appointed by him. Exodus 34:24Ver. 24. For I will cast out the nations before thee,.... Who are particularly mentioned, Ex 34:11 and therefore they need not be in any fear of them, when they should go up to the appointed place, and appear before the Lord; for to this they were not obliged, until they were come into the land of Canaan, and the inhabitants driven out before them:and enlarge thy borders; so that as they should have no enemies within them, to hinder and molest them, or discourage and deter them from attendance on the Lord at such set times, so they would be set at a great distance from them, that they should have nothing to fear from them; and should it be objected that at such times, when only women and children were left at home, and their borders were defenceless, it would be a proper opportunity for their enemies to invade them, it is further promised:neither, shall any man desire thy land; though it is a desirable land; and their neighbours, and especially the old inhabitants of it, envied the happiness of the Israelites, and could not but wish it was in their possession; yet God, who has the hearts of all men in his hands, and can direct their thoughts, and turn the inclinations of their minds, and influence their affections, and engage them with other objects, promises that they should not think of an invasion of them, or have their minds, and the desires and affections of their hearts, in the least

turned that way at these seasons, whatever they might have at other times; even when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in a year; at the feasts before mentioned, which was a most wonderful display of the power and providence of God. Exodus 34:25 Ver. 25. Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven,.... That is, not kill the passover, while there was any leaven in their houses; so the Targum of Jonathan, See Gill on "Ex 23:18" neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of passover be left unto the morning; neither any of the flesh, nor of the fat of the passover lamb: if any were left, it was to be burnt, see Ex 12:10. Exodus 34:26 Ver. 26. The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring,.... This, and another law in this verse, concerning not seething a kid in his mother's milk, are repeated from Ex 23:19. See Gill on "Ex 23:19". Exodus 34:27 Ver. 27. And the Lord said unto Moses,.... Being still with him on the mount: write thou these words; expressed in the preceding verses, from Ex 34:11, as he before had written in a book all those laws, contained in Ex 21:1 called the book of the covenant, Ex 24:4 and which perhaps might be destroyed, as well as the two tables were broken; and therefore upon the renewal of the covenant here, there is a repetition made of the principal laws before given, which are ordered also to be written in a book, which may very well be called by the same name, since it follows: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel, with Moses, as their representative and mediator, and with them represented by him: what is above related carries in it the form of a covenant between them, God having declared on his part what he would do for them, and what laws and rules he required to be observed on their part; which Moses assented to in their name, and was ordered to write them down, that he might repeat them to them. Exodus 34:28 Ver. 28. And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights,.... These were other forty days and nights, besides those he had been with the Lord, when he came down and broke the two tables in his hand, on sight of the idolatry of the people; yea, not only the Jewish writers think that he was on the mount three times forty days and forty nights, but also several learned Christian writers, as Dr. Lightfoot {p} and others; and it seems plain that he went up to the mountain three times, Ex 24:15 and it is not improbable that he was each time so long there; about the first and third times there can be no doubt, see Ex 24:18 and the text before us; and at the second time, when he went up to make reconciliation for the people, Ex 32:30 he says, that he fell down before the Lord, as at the first forty days and forty nights, De 9:18 and from the seventh day of the month Sivan, the day after the giving of the law, to the tenth of Tisri, on which day he now descended, are just so many days: he did neither eat bread nor drink water: and it is very likely slept not, he being supported without either of these by the power of God; and having such nearness of communion with God, and his mind taken up with what he heard and saw, he had no thoughts of, nor desires and cravings after such things, as well as he stood in no need of them; all which must be ascribed to the miraculous interposition of God in the support of him, See Gill on "Ex 24:18" and he wrote on the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments;

not Moses, for these were tables of stone, which he could not write or engrave upon without proper instruments, which it does not appear he had with him on the mount; but it was God that wrote them, who, in Ex 34:1 says he would write them, and from De 10:2 we are assured he did. {p} Works, vol. 1. p. 715, 716. Exodus 34:29 Ver. 29. And it came to pass, when Moses came down Mount Sinai,.... Which was on the day of atonement, according to Jarchi, that is, the tenth of Tisri, or September; and so the Jewish chronologers {q} fix his descent on this day: with the two tables of testimony in Moses's hand; the two tables he carried up, on which God had wrote the law, called "the testimony", being a testification and declaration of his will to the children of Israel: when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone, while he talked with him: the Targum of Jonathan is, "Moses knew not that the splendour of the form of his face was become illustrious, which he had from the brightness of the glory of the Shechinah of the Lord, at the time he talked with him." And this the apostle calls "the glory of his countenance", 2Co 3:7 the glory of the Lord as it passed before him, when in the cleft of the rock, and that degree of it he was admitted to the sight of, while conversing with God, during his stay on the mount forty days and forty nights, left a shining glory on his countenance; which while he was with God he could not be at all sensible of, the glory of God so infinitely surpassing that; and when he came down the mount, as he could not see his own face without a glass, so though the rays of light and glory that darted from his face were so bright and strong, that they might have been observed by him, yet his mind was so intent on what he had seen and heard, that he took no notice of them. The Vulgate Latin version renders it very wrongly, "that his face was horned", which has given occasion to painters to represent him in a ridiculous manner, as having horns coming out of his forehead; though the word has the signification of an horn, and the meaning of that version, as of others, may only be, that the skin of his face "darted out rays" {r} like horns, such as the rays of the sun appear to be like to the eye, see Hab 3:4 hence Jupiter Ammon, the same with the sun, is described as having horns {s}; and so Bacchus, who is supposed to be the same with Moses, is represented as having a horned face {t}. Now this glory was left on the countenance of Moses, to show that he had had communion with God, and that the law he brought with him was from him; and to signify the glory of it, and to command awe and reverence, and make men afraid to break it. {q} Seder Olam Rabba, c. 6. p. 19. {r} Nrq "radios ejacularetur", Tigurine version; "in modum cornu radiaret", Munster, Fagius, "[vel] rediasset", Vatablus; "splendere instar cornu", Drusius; so Karnon * in the Arabic language signifies the rays of the sun. * Golius, col. 1896. Castel. col. 3455. {s} Vid. Diodor. Sicul. l. 3. p. 201. Macrobi. Saturnal. l. 1. c. 21. {t} Diodor. Sicul. l. 4. p. 212. so Orpheus calls Bacchus, dikerwta, Hymn. p. 126. and Horace ascribes to him, "cornu decorum", Carmin. l. 2. Ode 19. Exodus 34:30 Ver. 30. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses,.... Who very probably met him at the bottom of the mount; these Israelites with Aaron were the princes, as Aben Ezra seems rightly to

interpret it, and as appears from the following verse; for Moses could not well be seen by the whole body of the people at once, upon his descent from the mount: behold, the skin of his face shone; darted out rays of light and glory all around it, much perhaps in the same manner as the glory about our Lord, and others, is painted by the Romanists: and they were afraid to come nigh him; there was something so majestic and striking in it; and perhaps they could not tell whether it foreboded good or evil to them; and this may signify, that as by the light of the law sin is discovered, it fills with a sense of wrath and fear of damnation; and being the ministration of condemnation and death, it is terrifying and killing, though it has a glory in it. Exodus 34:31 Ver. 31. And Moses called unto them,.... Who, as it appears by what follows, on sight of him were so terrified, that they did not proceed on to meet him, but went back, and therefore he called unto them to return and come forward: and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him; knowing him by his voice, and encouraged by his call of them, who before might take him to be something more than human, some glorious form, one of the heavenly angels appearing in this manner: and Moses talked with them; after he had put a vail on his face, of which there is an account in the following verses. He talked with them friendly, and told them all that had happened to him in the mount; what a glorious sight he had been indulged with; what a proclamation of the grace and goodness of God had been made to him; and what laws and ordinances God had enjoined him and them the observance of. Exodus 34:32 Ver. 32. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh,.... That is, after Aaron and the rulers had had a conversation with Moses, then the whole body of the people by turns were admitted to come before him, and hear the laws of God from him: and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him on Mount Sinai; besides the two tables of stone, and the testimony written on them, he gave them all the other commands he was ordered to write in a book, and which are recorded in this chapter; he kept back nothing from them, but enjoined them to keep all the Lord had commanded. Exodus 34:33 Ver. 33. And [till] Moses had done speaking with them,.... Not when he had done, as the Septuagint version, for then there would have been no occasion for it; but when he first began to speak to Aaron and the "rulers", and continued to speak to the congregation until he had finished what he had to say; even he did what follows, as soon as he perceived there was a glory on his face, which they could not bear to look at: he put a vail on his face; something that covered it in a good measure, a mask, or linen cloth, or some such thing. The obscurity of the law may be signified by this vail, both of the moral and ceremonial law; the moral law, which though it makes known the mind and will of God, with respect to what is to be done, or not done, yet not with respect to the affair of life and salvation: it makes known the one God as the object of worship, but gives no account of a trinity of persons in the Godhead; no hint of God in Christ, nor revelation of the Son of God; no view of a Saviour, no notion of pardon; nor does it point out the righteousness of Christ unto us; nor do we from it hear anything of the Spirit of God, and his grace, nor of eternal life

and glory: the ceremonial law, and its ordinances, did give some light into evangelical things, and did point out Christ, and the blessings of his grace, yet but darkly and obscurely; they were shadows of good things to come, and gave some dark and distant views of them, but were not so much as the image of the things, and did not bring them near, and set them in a clear light: likewise this vail may be an emblem of the darkness of the minds of men, with respect to the law, and the knowledge of divine things; especially of the Jews, who, as the apostle says, "could not steadfastly look at the end of that which is abolished": of the ceremonial law, which is disannulled, the end of which was Christ; he is the end for which it was made, the scope or mark at which it aimed, the term in which it issued, and in whom it had its complete fulfilment; but this they had not a perfect view of, and could not steadfastly behold: the moral law also is in some sense abolished by Christ, as the ministration of Moses, as a covenant of works, and as to the curse and condemnation of it to those that believe; and Christ he is the end of this, the fulfilling end of it, by conformity of nature, and obedience of life unto it, and by suffering the penalty of it; but such was the blindness of the Jews, that they were ignorant of the nature of this law, of the spirituality and perfection of it, of its use to convince men of sin, to condemn for it, but not to justify from it; were ignorant of the righteousness of God which the law required, and of Christ, and of the way of life and righteousness by him; and so of the Spirit of God, and his work, and of the mysteries of the Gospel, and of the books of the Old Testament; see 2Co 3:14. Exodus 34:34Ver. 34. But when Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him,.... Went into the tabernacle to converse with him, to pray unto him, and inquire about any matter of difficulty respecting the people of Israel he was concerned for, which he often did:he took the vail off until he came out: and so when men are truly converted, and turn to the Lord, the vail of darkness and unbelief is removed, and the true light shines, in which they see things in another light than they did before; and when they come into his presence, they come with hearts opened and unveiled, all things being naked and open to him with whom they have to do; and particularly saints under the Gospel dispensation, with an open face, as in a glass, behold the glory of the Lord; and when they get to heaven, they will then see face to face, and know as they are known, 2Co 3:16:and he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel [that] which he was commanded; this respects not the present time of his coming down from the mount, or out of the tabernacle with the law and commands now given, for these he had already declared; but after times, and all such times when he went in to the Lord to inquire of him his mind and will concerning certain things, in which the people wanted information, when, upon his return, he acquainted them with whatsoever the Lord ordered to be done. Exodus 34:35Ver. 35. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses's face shone,.... That is, not only when he came down from the mount, but whenever he came out of the tabernacle, where he had been inquiring of God, and conversing with him:and Moses put the vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him;

this he did from time to time, when he came out from the Lord he put on his vail, and when he went in again, he put it off. How long this brightness on his countenance remained, cannot be said with any certainty; Saadiah Gaon says, it did not remove from him to the day of his death: hence it is said, "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated", De 34:7 and Aben Ezra seems to approve of it; and it is the opinion of many great and learned men, that it continued as long as he lived.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 35:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 35

This chapter begins with a renewal of the command of the sabbath, [Ex 35:1](#) and contains an order for a freewill offering to be brought for the service of the sanctuary, and specifies the things to be brought, and for what uses, [Ex 35:4](#) to which there was a ready compliance, and men and women, princes and the common people, everyone according to what they had in possession, brought and offered it freely, [Ex 35:20](#) and for their encouragement, that their offering would not be in vain, they were informed there were two persons divinely inspired, to do, and teach to be done, all manner of work for the tabernacle, towards which they had made such a liberal and plentiful contribution, [Ex 35:30](#).

Ver. 1. **And Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together,**.... According to Jarchi, on the morrow after the day of atonement; that is, the next day after his descent from the mount, being desirous of setting about the building of the tabernacle, and making all things appertaining to it as soon as possible; which had been retarded through the sin of the golden calf, and making reconciliation for that:

and said unto them, these are the words which the Lord hath commanded, that ye should do them; namely, the law of the sabbath, as it had a peculiar relation to the making of the tabernacle, and the freewill offerings to be made on that account; for as for the commands, or other ordinances, whether ceremonial or judicial, the people had been made acquainted with them before.

[Exodus 35:2](#)

Ver. 2. **Six days shall work be done,**.... Or "may be done" {u}; everyone might do what work he pleased, or the business of his calling, on the six days of the weeks; he had liberty granted him of God, and might make use of it for the advantage of himself and his family; unless this can be thought to have a peculiar respect, as this repetition and renewal of this law seems to have, to the building of the tabernacle; and so is an order for working at it closely and constantly all the six days of the week, and in things belonging to it, until the whole was finished:

but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day; or "holiness" {w}; wholly holy, and be separated and devoted to holy service and religious duties, abstaining

from all manner of work, even from the work of the tabernacle; for though that was designed for the worship of God, and required dispatch, yet the sabbath was not to be violated on account of it: and, as Jarchi observes, this admonition concerning the sabbath was given previous to the command of building the tabernacle; to show that that did not drive away the sabbath, or that the sabbath was not to give way to it, or to be broken for the sake of it, it being

a sabbath of rest to the Lord; in which the Israelites were to rest from bodily labour, and spend the day in the service of God, and to his honour and glory:

whosoever doeth work therein: even though it might be in anything belonging to the tabernacle:

shall be put to death; the Targum of Jonathan adds, by casting stones, stoning being the punishment of sabbath breakers,

[Nu 15:35](#).

{u} hvet "fiat", Piscator. {w} vdq "sanctitas", Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius.

Exodus 35:3

Ver. 3. **Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day**. This law seems to be a temporary one, and not to be continued, nor is it said to be throughout their generations as elsewhere, where the law of the sabbath is given or repeated; it is to be restrained to the building of the tabernacle, and while that was about, to which it is prefaced; and it is designed to prevent all public or private working on the sabbath day, in anything belonging to that; having no fire to heat their tools or melt their metal, or do any thing for which that was necessary; for it can hardly be thought that this is to be taken in the strictest sense, as an entire prohibition of kindling a fire and the use of it on that day, which is so absolutely useful, and needful in various cases, and where acts of mercy and necessity require it; as in cold seasons of the year, for the warming and comforting of persons who otherwise would be unfit for religious exercises, and on the account of infants and aged persons, who could not subsist without it; and in cases of sickness, and various disorders which necessarily require it; and even for the preparation of food, which must be had on that day as on others, the sabbath being not a fast, but rather a festival, as it is with the Jews; and yet this law is interpreted by them in the most rigorous sense: they put kindling a fire among the principal works forbidden on that day {x}, and that not only to bake bread and boil flesh, as Aben Ezra interprets it here, but to warm themselves with; nay, they think it unlawful to touch an hearth, or a coal of fire, or a firebrand, or

anything that may give them any warmth in a cold season; and if, for the sake of infants or aged persons, there is need of a fire or heating a stove, they hire a Christian to do it, or so prepare and order matters the day before that it kindle of itself {y}; and so Leo Modena {z} says,

"they do not meddle with any fire, nor touch any wood that is on fire, nor kindle any, nor put it out; nor do they so much as light a candle on the sabbath day: and if the place be cold where they dwell, except they have any stoves, or hot houses, or else have some one that is no Jew to kindle a fire for them; or had so ordered the matter before hand that the fire should kindle of itself at such a time; they must even be content to sit in the cold all that day:"

but here they nicely distinguish and observe, that it is said,

throughout your habitations; their private dwellings, but not the habitation of the Lord, or the house of the sanctuary; and on this score they allow of kindling a fire in Beth Moked {a}, an apartment in the temple, where a fire was constantly kept for the priests that kept watch to warm themselves at.

{x} Misn. Sabbat, c. 7. sect. 2. {y} Buxtorf. Synagog. Jud. c. 16. p. 361. {z} History of the Rites, &c. of the Jews, par. 3. c. 1. sect. 3. {a} T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 20. 1.

Exodus 35:4

Ver. 4. And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel,.... Continued his speech to them, being convened by him, after by way of preface he had repeated the law of the sabbath, with an additional circumstance to it, "pro tempore":

saying, this is the thing which the Lord commanded; ordered Moses to inform them of as his will, when he was with him upon the mount the first time; but through their idolatry, and time spent in making up matters between God and them, he had not had till now an opportunity of acquainting them with it:

saying; as follows.

Exodus 35:5

Ver. 5-9. Take ye from amongst you an offering unto the Lord,.... That is, they were to take a part of their substance, of what they were possessed of, every man according to

his ability, out of what he had in his hand that was suitable, and present it as a freewill offering to the Lord, for the use of the tabernacle to be built, and the service of it:

whosoever is of a willing heart; that is, of a generous and liberal disposition:

let him bring it, an offering of the Lord; or an offering to him, otherwise not; if brought niggardly and grudgingly it would not be acceptable, for God loves a willing and cheerful giver:

gold, silver, and brass: here and in the four following verses, the several things are particularly mentioned, which would be wanted in building the tabernacle, and in the service of it, and therefore would be acceptable; and they being exactly the same, and delivered in the same words and in the same order as in [Ex 25:3](#) the reader is referred to the notes there. See Gill on "Ex 25:3".

See Gill on "Ex 25:4".

See Gill on "Ex 25:5".

See Gill on "Ex 25:6".

See Gill on "Ex 25:7".

Exodus 35:6

Ver. 6. See Gill on "Ex 35:5".

Exodus 35:7

Ver. 7. See Gill on "Ex 35:5".

Exodus 35:8

Ver. 8. See Gill on "Ex 35:5".

Exodus 35:9

Ver. 9. See Gill on "Ex 35:5".

Exodus 35:10

Ver. 10. **And every wise hearted among you shall come**,.... Every ingenious man, that is skilful in any mechanic art and business, who has a peculiar turn of mind, and employs his thoughts to improve, in a curious manner, in whatsoever manufactory he is concerned, every such an one is invited by Moses to come to him:

and make all the Lord hath commanded, the particulars of which follow.

Exodus 35:11

Ver. 11. **The tabernacle**,.... Which is not a general name for the whole, the court, the holy place, and the holy of holies; but designs the ten fine linen curtains curiously wrought; or the under curtains, as Jarchi expresses it, which were within:

his tent; the curtains of goats' hair, which were a covering over the others, and were made for a roof of the tabernacle, as the same writer observes:

and his covering; the covering for the tent, which was made of rams' skins, and badgers' skins:

his taches; which clasped, coupled the curtains together, both the one and the other; the one sort were of silver, and the other of brass:

and his boards, his bars, his pillars; which were all of shittim wood; the boards were the walls of the tabernacle, the bars which kept them tight together, and the pillars were those on which the hanging of the door of the tent, and on which the vail that divided between the holy of holies, were hung; of all which, see [Ex 26:1](#) &c. to end of chapter:

and his sockets; which were of silver, into which the boards were let and fastened, see [Ex 26:19](#), &c.

Exodus 35:12

Ver. 12. **The ark and the staves thereof**,.... To carry it with, which were all made of shittim wood:

[with] the mercy seat; made of pure gold; these were set in the most holy place:

and the vail of the covering; which divided between the holy and the holy of holies; of these see [Ex 25:10](#).

Exodus 35:13

Ver. 13. The table and his staves, and all his vessels,.... The table of shewbread, and all things appertaining to it:

and the shewbread; which is mentioned for the sake of the table, and to show what was intended, and the use of it; for otherwise the shewbread was not yet to be made, nor by the artificers here called together; and is to be interpreted of the dishes of the shewbread, in which it was put; and so Junius and Tremellius render it, the instruments or vessels of the shewbread; of these see [Ex 25:23](#).

Exodus 35:14

Ver. 14. The candlestick also for the light, and his furniture,.... The tongs and snuff dishes:

and his lamps, with the oil for the light; the cups, in which were put the oil and the wicks to burn and give light, as Jarchi interprets them; of these see [Ex 25:31](#).

Exodus 35:15

Ver. 15. And the incense altar, and his staves,.... Which were overlaid with gold; hence this altar was called the golden altar, of which see [Ex 30:1](#)

and the anointing oil and sweet incense; each of which were made of various spices, see [Ex 30:23](#)

and the hanging for the door at the entering in of the tabernacle; at the east end of it, there being there, as Jarchi observes, neither boards nor curtains; see [Ex 27:16](#).

Exodus 35:16

Ver. 16. The altar of burnt offering with his brazen grate, his staves, and all his

vessels,.... Of which see [Ex 27:1](#)

the laver and his foot; Aben Ezra here observes that it had no staves, and conjectures it was carried in wagons when removed.

Exodus 35:17

Ver. 17. **The hangings of the court**,.... Of the tabernacle, the outward court, which were of fine twined linen, a hundred cubits long on each side, north and south, and fifty cubits broad, east and west; see [Ex 27:9](#)

his pillars, and their sockets; the pillars were they on which the hangings were hung; and the sockets were what the pillars were let into and fastened in:

and the hanging for the door of the court; at the east of it, of which see [Ex 27:16](#).

Exodus 35:18 Ver. 18. The pins of the tabernacle,.... Which were to fix and fasten the ends of the curtains in the ground, that they might not be moved with the wind, as Jarchi observes:and the pins of the court, and their cords; which were for the same use; see Ex 27:19. Exodus 35:19 Ver. 19. The cloths of service, to do service in the holy place,.... To wrap up the various vessels of the tabernacle, when removed from place to place; see Ex 31:10 or the priests' vestments, in which they did their service, and therefore it follows, by way of apposition:the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office; for which there are particular directions in Ex 28:1. Exodus 35:20 Ver. 20. And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses. After they had heard what Moses was ordered to propose unto them, they immediately went to their tents, and fetched what they had with them, or were willing to part with, and brought it directly as a freewill offering to the Lord; as Ex 35:21 shows: from hence, Aben Ezra observes, we may learn, that the whole congregation of Israel came to the tabernacle, company after company. Exodus 35:21 Ver. 21. And they came everyone whose heart stirred him up,.... Who felt an impulse upon his mind, a strong inclination in him:and everyone whom his spirit made willing; or was endowed with a free and liberal spirit, and was heartily willing to bear a part, and cheerfully contribute to this service; otherwise the willing mind, as well as the ability, were given them of God; see 1Ch 29:14:and they brought the Lord's offering; an offering to him, and such as he directed and disposed them to bring, and which was for his worship and service, and the honour of his name, and was acceptable to him:to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation; for the making of that, the several parts of it, and all things in it:and for all his service; either the service of God, or of his tabernacle, which is the same:and for the holy garments; that is, of Aaron and his sons. Exodus 35:22 Ver. 22. And they

came both men and women, as many as were willing hearted,.... And none else were asked to come; and this supposes, that as there were many of both sexes that were quite cordial, and heartily willing to contribute to the uttermost of what they had for this service, so there were others that were not: and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets; the first of these, according to our version, seem to be ornaments, not about the neck, but the hands and arms, or wrists, see Ge 24:22 though the word seems to have the signification of an hook, and may mean buckles or clasps, with which some part of their garments were coupled and fastened; so Kimchi says {b}, that in his opinion it was an ornament somewhat like a needle, with which they pierced and joined the two parts of the collar of a shirt under the throat: the next are such ornaments as were worn in the ears, and though many had been given for the making of the golden calf, yet not all; there were many that did not give their earrings for this service, especially the women, perhaps only the men, see Ex 32:2 the "rings" were such as were worn on the finger, as all seem to agree; but what the "tablets" were is hard to say, the word being only used in this place and Nu 31:50: some take them for ornaments worn on the right arm; others for the covering of another part, not to be named; others for girdles or aprons; Aben Ezra gives a different account of most of them; he says the first design ornaments in the ear, or earrings; the second such as were worn in the nose, or nose jewels; and the third indeed such as were put on the finger; and the fourth, that were upon the arm: however, they were all jewels of gold; or were all such ornaments as were made of gold; and these are first mentioned, as being probably first brought, and were what were asked for in the first place, gold being wanted for several things: and every man that offered [offered] an offering of gold unto the Lord; that is, everyone of the first company that came, their offering was of gold, or something made of gold. {b} Sepher Shorash. rad. xx Exodus 35:23 Ver. 23. And every man with whom was found blue, and purple, and scarlet,.... Wool or yarn of either of the colours; unless it can be supposed there might be with some of them the ingredients with which colours were made, brought with them out of Egypt: and fine linen; they had brought out of Egypt, and for which that country was famous: and goats' [hair]; which in those countries was so long as to be shorn like the wool of sheep: and red skins of the rams; died red, for it does not mean any that were naturally so, of which none are known: and badgers' skins; see Ex 25:5 of each of these, such who had them in their possession, and their hearts were willing to part with them: brought [them]; to Moses, to the tabernacle or tent where he was. Exodus 35:24 Ver. 24. Every one that did offer an offering of silver and brass brought the Lord's offering,.... Every one that had any quantity of either of these, whose heart was inclined freely to part therewith, brought it as a freewill offering to the Lord: and every man with whom was shittim wood; or acacia, a sort of wood which grew pretty plentifully in those parts; and such who had cut it down for some use or another, and were disposed to part with it for any work of the service; of which many things were to be made, whether they were trees they had felled, or planks and boards they had cut

them into:brought [it]; a sufficient quantity of it, for the various uses it was to be put unto. Exodus 35:25Ver. 25. And all the women that were wise hearted,.... That were ingenious, and had a good hand at spinning particularly, these were of the common and lower sort; the more honourable and richer sort of women are before mentioned, as bringing jewels or ornaments of gold of different sorts: but these were such whodid spin [with] their hands; in which way they got their living: some were more dexterous at it than others:and brought that which they had spun, both of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine linen; that is, yarn of these several colours, and flaxen thread, of which fine linen was made, all ready for the weaver, whether in woollen or linen. Exodus 35:26Ver. 26. And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom,.... To be ingenious in their business, and to study to do it in a curious manner, and to do that which others could not:spun goats' [hair]; some join the phrase, "in wisdom", in the preceding clause with this, neglecting the accent "Athnach", which divides them, thus, "in wisdom spun goats' hair"; and which, without being separated from the preceding clause, may be understood and repeated in this: for, as Aben Ezra says, to spin goats' hair was an art that required excellent wisdom; and so Jarchi: in the eastern countries there is a sort of goats' hair very bright and fine, and hangs to the ground, and the beauty of it is equal almost to that of silk, and is never sheared, but combed off, and the women of the country spin it; and at this day a great trade is driven with it at Angora and Aleppo {c}. {c} Calmet in the word "Hair". Exodus 35:27Ver. 27. And the rulers brought onyx stones, and stones to be set,.... Or "stones of fillings" {d}, to be set in ouches, and fill them up, as stones set in rings do:for the ephod, and for the breastplate; the onyx stones were for the shoulder pieces of the ephod; and the other stones were for the breastplate of judgment, and both to be borne by the high priest, for a memorial of the children of Israel before the Lord, whose names were engraven on these stones: the rulers are mentioned last, as bringing their offerings: the reason of which may not be, because they were backward to it, for they might offer earlier, though recorded last; or if they offered last, it might be because they brought things that others could not; namely, the precious stones here mentioned, and other things in the next verse, the common people had not; though some of the Jewish writers tax them with dilatoriness, and observe a letter wanting in the word for "rulers", it generally has; omitted to denote, as they think, that they were slow and backward in offering; so Jarchi notes from R. Nathan. {d} Myalmh ynba "lapides plenitudinum", Pagninus, Montanus; "repletionum", Vatablus; "impletionum", Drusius. Exodus 35:28Ver. 28. And spice and oil,.... Such excellent spices and precious oil, pure oil olive, as the common people had not, and which they brought out of Egypt; the one wasfor the light: for the light of the candlestick only; the oil, and other spices,were for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense; the spices for the former were pure myrrh, sweet cinnamon, sweet calamus and cassia; and for the latter, stacte, onycha, galbanum, with pure frankincense. Exodus 35:29Ver. 29. The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the Lord,.... What they did, whether more or less, they

did it cheerfully and willingly, as to the Lord, for his service and glory: every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for all manner of work, which the Lord had commanded to be made by the hand of Moses: See Gill on "Ex 35:21" and as there were work and service of God's appointment to be done in the legal tabernacle, so there are in the Gospel church; such as prayer, praise, preaching, and hearing the word, and the administration of ordinances; and for the support of which contributions are made; and all this is to be done willingly and cordially: the Gospel is to be preached not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre sake, but of a ready mind; the word is to be heard and received with all readiness, and ordinances are to be submitted to cheerfully, and with the whole heart; and the contributions made for the poor, and the support of divine service, are to be generous and bountiful: and those who have such a willing heart and spirit, have it not by nature or of themselves, but from the efficacious grace of God, which makes them a willing people in the day of his power; and from the free Spirit of God, who works in them, both to will and to do of his good pleasure; and from the love of God and Christ constraining them to it: and these act according to their several abilities, some have more grace and greater gifts, and others lesser and meaner; as well as some have more of this world's goods than others, and so capable of doing more service; but all, according to their capacity, of every sex and class, are to contribute all they can freely and willingly, to the carrying on of the cause of God and interest of religion: some bring gold, and some goats' hair, some silver, and some brass, &c. but all being offered willingly, from right principles, and with right views, is acceptable. Exodus 35:30 Ver. 30. And Moses said unto the children of Israel,.... After they had brought their several freewill offerings: see; observe, take notice of this, for your encouragement, that your service will not be in vain, for want of proper persons to perform this work, and to guide, direct, and oversee it: the Lord hath called by name Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; of this man, and of his descent, See Gill on "Ex 31:2". Exodus 35:31 Ver. 31-33. And he hath filled him with the Spirit of God,.... This and the two following verses contain the account of the qualifications of Bezaleel, which he had in an extraordinary manner from the Lord, and these are expressed in the same words as in Ex 31:3, See Gill on "Ex 31:3" See Gill on "Ex 31:4" See Gill on "Ex 31:5". Exodus 35:32 Ver. 32. See Gill on "Ex 35:31" Exodus 35:33 Ver. 33. See Gill on "Ex 35:31" Exodus 35:34 Ver. 34. And he hath put in his heart that he may teach,.... Instruct others in the things he had knowledge of; the Lord not only gave him gifts of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, to devise and contrive curious works, and how to perform them, but gave him a capacity, and inclined his mind to teach others, how to work these works; for not all that have knowledge have a capacity and a will to teach others also; this is of God: [both] he, and Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; who was joined with him as a companion and assistant in the same service; him the Lord also qualified, both to devise things, and to teach them others; of this man, See Gill on "Ex 31:6". Exodus 35:35 Ver. 35. Them hath he filled with wisdom

of heart,.... Or wisdom in their heart, a large measure of it, signified by their being filled with it; and whatever wisdom men have, whether in things natural, civil, moral, or spiritual, it is all of God: this wasto work all manner of work, of the engraver; which the setting of stones in the ephod or breastplate required:and of the cunning workman; and such an one was necessary for the making the curtains of the tabernacle, the vail between the holy and the holy of holies, and the ephod and breastplate of the high priest:and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen; in which there were various works of things belonging to the tabernacle, and persons employed in it:and of the weaver; both in linen and woollen, for the curtains and hangings of the tabernacle, and for the priests' garments:[even] of those that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work: whether in the above things, or in any sort of curious work, in gold, silver, brass, wood, or stone.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 36:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 36

Bezaleel and Aholiab, with the artificers under them, having a call as well as qualifications for the service of the sanctuary, and having received from Moses the materials for it, set about it, [Ex 36:1](#) but the people bringing more than was necessary, they acquaint Moses with it, who by a proclamation restrained from it, [Ex 36:4](#) and next an account is given of the several things that were wrought by them, as first the curtains for the tabernacle, both of linen and goats' hair, and the coverings of them, [Ex 36:8](#) next the boards for the tabernacle, and the sockets they were set in, and the bars for the boards, [Ex 36:20](#) and then the vail which parted the most holy place from the holy place, and the hanging which divided between the holy place and the court, [Ex 36:35](#).

Ver. 1. **Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man,**.... Or every ingenious artificer under them: when they began to work is not precisely said, but it is very probable they set about it directly, as soon as they were furnished with materials for it, nor is it said where they wrought; it is very likely there was a particular place, where they were ranged according to their respective manufactories, and where they did their work under the inspection, and by the direction of these two men:

in whom the Lord put wisdom and understanding, to know how to work all manner of work, for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the Lord had commanded; for as all the wisdom and understanding, which Bezaleel and Aholiab had for the building of the tabernacle, and making everything appertaining to it, and for instructing others to do the same, were from the Lord; so all the wisdom, understanding, and capacity in the artificers to learn of them, and work according to their directions, were also from him; who in a very extraordinary manner enlarged their faculties, and increased their natural abilities, to take in what was suggested to them, and perform their work exactly agreeable thereunto.

[Exodus 36:2](#)

Ver. 2. **And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man,**.... It was not enough that they had qualifications for this work, but they must have a call to it from Moses, to whom the whole affair was committed, to see that it was done according to the pattern shown him in the mount: so all that are concerned in the

public work and service of the church of God should have a call unto it both from the Lord and from the church:

in whose heart the Lord had put wisdom, even everyone whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it; who had not only abilities given him of God, but a mind disposed for it, a willingness of heart, a readiness of soul for such service, was even eager upon it, and in haste to be at it.

Exodus 36:3

Ver. 3. **And they received of Moses all the offering,**.... That is, Bezaleel and Aholiab received it of him, who delivered it to the several workmen, as the nature of their work required, some one thing, and some another: to some gold, to others silver, to others brass, and to some they delivered out fine linen, and blue, purple, and scarlet yarn, and to others shittim wood; Moses gave all out faithfully that he received, and kept back nothing for his own use or private advantage, even all the above things of which the offering consisted:

which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of the sanctuary, to make it [withal]; and which perhaps they went and fetched the same day they were called together, and acquainted with the mind of God concerning it; or at least they brought it in a very short space of time, and as soon as it possibly could be; it was delivered to the workmen, that the work might be begun, and carried on with the utmost expedition:

and they brought yet unto him free offerings every morning; they continued for a course of time afterwards to bring their freewill offerings of one thing or another to Moses, every morning, which perhaps was the most suitable time for him to receive them; and best expresses their readiness and diligence in bringing them, and which, as they brought, he sent to the workmen, as appears by what follows.

Exodus 36:4

Ver. 4. **And all the wise men that wrought all the work of the sanctuary,**.... The ingenious artificers who were employed, some in one thing, and some in another, either on the tabernacle itself, or the vessels of it, and things appertaining to it;

came every man from his work which they made; left off their work by mutual consent and agreement, and came in a body to Moses.

Exodus 36:5

Ver. 5. **And they spake unto Moses, saying,....** One in the name of the rest:

the people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make; they had taken an estimate of what was to be done, and of what was necessary for the doing of it, and of what the people brought for this service; and they found there was a great deal more brought than would be wanted, and therefore they thought proper to advise Moses of it, that no more might be brought: it is hard to say which is most to be wondered at, the great liberality of the people in contributing so freely and bountifully, and continuing to do so without being urged, or even asked; or the honesty of the workmen, one and all, who might have gone on to have received the gifts of the people by the hands of Moses, and what was superfluous might have converted to their own use; but instead of this, they agree as one man to let Moses know how the state of things was, and prevent the people from making any more contributions.

Exodus 36:6

Ver. 6. **And Moses gave commandment,....** Orders to some proper person or persons about him;

and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, or "caused a voice to pass"; a crier or herald, as the Targums, who went through the camp and published in every quarter:

saying, let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary; as the men in cutting shittim wood, and planing it, and the women in spinning blue, purple, and scarlet yarn and goats' hair:

so the people were restrained from bringing; that is, any more: instead of a spur to liberality, which most want, a restraint was laid upon these to check it, and prevent an excess in it, of which there is rarely any danger; so eager, forward, and zealous were they in this good work.

Exodus 36:7

Ver. 7. **For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it,....** The gold, silver, brass, and precious stones, the wood and yarn, which had been already brought in, were sufficient for everything they were ordered to make:

and too much; a great deal more than would be used; much would remain after all was wrought: what was done with this is not said, whether it was returned to the people, or laid up for the use of the tabernacle and service, as might hereafter be wanted; which latter seems most probable.

Exodus 36:8

Ver. 8-38. **And every wise hearted man among them that wrought the work of the tabernacle,....** Did the part assigned him, what he was fittest for, and most skilful in: particularly some

made ten curtains, &c. which were properly the tabernacle, and were made first, and then the several things appertaining to it; and from hence, to the end of the chapter [Ex 36:9](#), is only an account of the making of the tabernacle, its curtains, coverings, boards, sockets, and bars, the vail for the most holy place, and the hangings for the tabernacle, exactly as they are ordered to be made,

See Gill on "Ex 26:1" &c. to end of chapter: and it may be observed, that throughout the account of the various articles, it is all along said "he" did this and the other; either referring to Moses, by whose orders they were done, or to Bezaleel, the chief director of the work, or to each and everyone of the artificers severally concerned.

Exodus 36:9

Ver. 9. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:10

Ver. 10. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:11

Ver. 11. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:12

Ver. 12. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:13

Ver. 13. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:14

Ver. 14. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:15

Ver. 15. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:16

Ver. 16. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:17

Ver. 17. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:18

Ver. 18. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:19

Ver. 19. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:20

Ver. 20. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:21

Ver. 21. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:22

Ver. 22. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:23

Ver. 23. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:24

Ver. 24. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:25

Ver. 25. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:26

Ver. 26. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:27

Ver. 27. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:28

Ver. 28. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

[Exodus 36:29](#)

Ver. 29. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

[Exodus 36:30](#)

Ver. 30. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

[Exodus 36:31](#)

Ver. 31. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

[Exodus 36:32](#)

Ver. 32. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

[Exodus 36:33](#)

Ver. 33. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

[Exodus 36:34](#)

Ver. 34. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

[Exodus 36:35](#)

Ver. 35. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

[Exodus 36:36](#)

Ver. 36. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:37

Ver. 37. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

Exodus 36:38

Ver. 38. See Gill on "Ex 36:8"

John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.

Exodus 37:1

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 37

This chapter continues the account of the making of the tabernacle, and the furniture of it, particularly the ark, mercy seat, and cherubim, [Ex 37:1](#) the shewbread table, and what appertained to that, [Ex 37:10](#) the candlestick, and all the vessels of it, [Ex 37:17](#) and the altar of incense, together with the anointing oil, and pure incense, [Ex 37:25](#).

Ver. 1-29. **And Bezaleel made the ark of shittim wood**,.... Jarchi says, because he gave his mind to this work more than the rest of the wise men, it is called by his name. It is a notion of some Jewish writers that the ark was made by Bezaleel, without the help of others; but there is no sufficient reason to be given for it; for other things are equally ascribed to him in this and the following chapter, as the mercy seat with the cherubim, the shewbread table, the candlestick of pure gold, the two altars, the laver of brass, with other things, which are only said to be made by him, because they were made by his direction, and he having the oversight of them while making; wherefore Aben Ezra observes, that this is particularly said for the glory of the ark. Of the ark, and all other things mentioned in this chapter,
See Gill on "Ex 25:1" &c. to end of chapter,
See Gill on "Ex 30:1" &c. to end of chapter.

Exodus 37:2

Ver. 2. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:3

Ver. 3. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:4

Ver. 4. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:5

Ver. 5. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:6

Ver. 6. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:7

Ver. 7. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:8

Ver. 8. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:9

Ver. 9. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:10

Ver. 10. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:11

Ver. 11. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:12

Ver. 12. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:13

Ver. 13. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:14

Ver. 14. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:15

Ver. 15. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:16

Ver. 16. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:17

Ver. 17. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:18

Ver. 18. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:19

Ver. 19. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:20

Ver. 20. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

Exodus 37:21

Ver. 21. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

[Exodus 37:22](#)

Ver. 22. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

[Exodus 37:23](#)

Ver. 23. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

[Exodus 37:24](#)

Ver. 24. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

[Exodus 37:25](#)

Ver. 25. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

[Exodus 37:26](#)

Ver. 26. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

[Exodus 37:27](#)

Ver. 27. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

[Exodus 37:28](#)

Ver. 28. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

[Exodus 37:29](#)

Ver. 29. See Gill on "Ex 37:1".

John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.

Exodus 38:1

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 38

This chapter is a continuation of the account of the making of the things belonging to the tabernacle, particularly the altar of burnt offering, [Ex 38:1](#) the laver of brass, and the things it was made of, [Ex 38:8](#) the court and its hangings, pillars, sockets, hooks and pins, [Ex 38:9](#) then follows an account of the quantities of gold, silver, and brass, expended in the making of the several things appertaining to the sanctuary, [Ex 38:21](#).

Ver. 1-7. **And he made the altar of burnt offering**,.... That is, Bezaleel made it, or it was made by his direction, he having the care and oversight of it, wherefore the making of it is ascribed to him, [2Ch 1:5](#) the account of this, its horns, vessels, rings, and staves, is carried on to [Ex 38:2](#) of which

See Gill on "Ex 27:1" see Gill on "Ex 27:2" see Gill on "Ex 27:3" see Gill on "Ex 27:4" see Gill on "Ex 27:5" see Gill on "Ex 27:6" see Gill on "Ex 27:7" see Gill on "Ex 27:8".

Exodus 38:2

Ver. 2. See Gill on "Ex 38:1".

Exodus 38:3

Ver. 3. See Gill on "Ex 38:1".

Exodus 38:4

Ver. 4. See Gill on "Ex 38:1".

Exodus 38:5

Ver. 5. See Gill on "Ex 38:1".

[Exodus 38:6](#)

Ver. 6. See Gill on "Ex 38:1".

[Exodus 38:7](#)

Ver. 7. See Gill on "Ex 38:1".

[Exodus 38:8](#)

Ver. 8. **And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass,**.... Not of the brass of the offering, for of that were made the brazen altar, its grate and vessels, the sockets of the court and court gate, and the pins of the tabernacle, [Ex 38:29](#) but no mention is made there of the laver; for that was made, as here said,

of the looking glasses of [the women] assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; though these are called looking glasses, it is not to be supposed that they were made of glass as ours are; for of what use could such be in the making of a brazen laver? Some indeed choose to read the words "with the looking glasses" {d}, and take the sense to be, that there were looking glasses about the laver, affixed to it, that when the priests came to wash, they might see their spots, and the better know how to cleanse themselves from them: but it should be observed, that the priests did not come hither to wash their faces, but their hands and feet, [Ex 30:19](#) and so stood in no need of looking glasses for that purpose. The particle b is here, as Aben Ezra observes, instead of m, and denotes the matter of which the laver was made, and therefore these instruments to behold the face in, or those mirrors, were of brass, as both he and Philo the Jew {e} affirm; and, indeed, what else could they be, for a laver of brass to be made of? mirrors in former times were made of various sorts of metal polished, some of gold, some of silver, some of brass, and some of brass and tin {f}; and the Indians to this day have mirrors made of brass, well polished, and exactly represent the complexion {g}. Pliny says {h}, that those of Brundisium, which were made of brass and tin mixed, were with the ancient Romans reckoned the best. Aristotle {i} speaks of mirrors of brass, and of their receiving and showing the least touch, because the brass is smooth and polished; and so in our times, there are such as are made of polished steel, and even of burnished brass too: De la Hay {k} says that he had one in his study, which was given him, made of brass of Damascus, and was so finely polished that no crystal one could give a truer sight of the face than that; however, it is certain the ancients used such kind of mirrors; see [Job 37:18](#) these the good women of

Israel, in their great zeal, brought for the service of the sanctuary, though they were of daily use, and peculiarly serviceable to them in their dressing; for though the word "women" is not in the text, it is rightly supplied, as it is in all the three Targums, the word being feminine, and as may be justified by a parallel passage, [1Sa 2:22](#) indeed Varenius {l} proposes another, rendering the words thus,

"of the looking glasses in great number gathered together, which they had heaped together at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation;"

but the word used is active and not passive, and is used of persons gathering together, and not of things gathered, as appears from the above quoted place, and others; and these women gathered together, not for devotion and religion, to pray, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan paraphrase it, or to pray, and hear the words of the law, as Aben Ezra, much less to bear any part in the ministry and service of the sanctuary, which as yet was not built; for this tabernacle of the congregation was no other than the tent of Moses, or, however, some little tabernacle erected while the other was preparing, see

[Ex 33:7](#) hither the women crowded with their mirrors of brass for the service of the sanctuary; for the word signifies an assembling in troops like an army; and they came in great numbers and beset the door of the tent where Moses was, that he might take their offerings at their hands; not but that it will be allowed that devout women sometimes did assemble at the tabernacle and temple, to perform acts of religion and devotion; but this seems not to be the case here, nor this a time and place for it; see [1Sa 2:22](#).

{d} tarmb "cum speculis", Oleaster. {e} De Vita Mosis, l. 3. p. 673. {f} Vid. Doughtei Analecta Sacr. excurs. 44. p. 124. {g} Agreement of Customs between the East Indians and Jews, art. 15. p. 65. {h} Nat. Hist. l. 33. c. 9. & l. 34. c. 17. {i} De Insomniis, c. 2. {k} Apud Habikhorst. de mulier. Zobheoth in Thesaur. Theolog. Philolog. vol. 1. p. 321. {l} Apud ib. p. 318.

[Exodus 38:9](#)

Ver. 9-20. **And he made the court,**.... The open court of the tabernacle, where the people met, of which, its pillars, sockets, hangings, hooks, and pins, an account is given, to [Ex 38:10](#) of which See Gill on "Ex 27:9" see Gill on "Ex 27:10" see Gill on "Ex 27:11" see Gill on "Ex 27:12" see Gill on "Ex 27:13" see Gill on "Ex 27:14" see Gill on "Ex 27:15" see Gill on "Ex 27:16" see Gill on "Ex 27:17" see Gill on "Ex 27:18" see Gill on "Ex 27:19".

Exodus 38:10

Ver. 10. See Gill on "Ex 38:9".

Exodus 38:11

Ver. 11. See Gill on "Ex 38:9".

Exodus 38:12

Ver. 12. See Gill on "Ex 38:9".

Exodus 38:13

Ver. 13. See Gill on "Ex 38:9".

Exodus 38:14

Ver. 14. See Gill on "Ex 38:9".

Exodus 38:15

Ver. 15. See Gill on "Ex 38:9".

Exodus 38:16

Ver. 16. See Gill on "Ex 38:9".

Exodus 38:17

Ver. 17. See Gill on "Ex 38:9".

[Exodus 38:18](#)

Ver. 18. See Gill on "Ex 38:9".

[Exodus 38:19](#)

Ver. 19. See Gill on "Ex 38:9".

[Exodus 38:20](#)

Ver. 20. See Gill on "Ex 38:9".

[Exodus 38:21](#)

Ver. 21. **This is the sum of the tabernacle**,.... Not of the several parts of the tabernacle, and the several things belonging to it, before enumerated, as made and delivered to the care and custody of the Levites, but of the materials of which they were made, particularly the gold and silver, and the brass; the several sums and weight of which are given in the following verses:

[even] of the tabernacle of the testimony; in which the law, the testimony of the will of God, was put enclosed in the ark:

as it was counted, according to the commandment of Moses; when it was brought in to him by the people, and delivered by him to Bezaleel, Aholiab, and the artificers;

[for] the service of the Levites; or by means of their ministry, who were employed in taking this account:

by the hand of Ithamar, son to Aaron the priest; the youngest son of Aaron, who had the direction and oversight of this affair.

[Exodus 38:22](#)

Ver. 22. **And Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah**,.... Of whom and his descent see [Ex 31:2](#)

made all that the Lord commanded Moses; gave directions about them, and took care that the tabernacle and all things belonging to it were made, which the Lord commanded Moses, and in the exact manner in which they were ordered to be made.

Exodus 38:23

Ver. 23. And with him was Aholiab, son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan,.... Of him see [Ex 31:6](#)

an engraver; of precious stones, as those in the ephod and breastplate:

and a cunning workman; in devising and working curious figured works, either in weaving or with the needle:

and an embroiderer in blue, and purple, and in scarlet, and in fine linen; which were used in the curtains and hangings of the tabernacle, and in the priests' garments.

Exodus 38:24

Ver. 24. All the gold that was occupied for the work, in all the work of the [place],.... That was expended in making the mercy seat and cherubim, and the candlestick, which were all of pure gold; besides other things belonging to the ark and shewbread table; and the plates, with which the ark and many other things were covered or glided:

even the gold of the offering; which the people brought and offered freely; as their bracelets, earrings, and jewels of gold, [Ex 35:22](#)

was twenty nine talents, and seven hundred and thirty shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary: now as it is clear from

[Ex 38:25](#) that a talent is of the value of 3000 shekels, which, according to Brerewood, amount to three hundred and seventy five pounds of our money; and reckoning as he does the value of gold to be twelve times that of silver, a talent of gold, with him, is, of our money, 4500 pounds; so that twenty nine talents, seven hundred and thirty shekels, are reckoned by him at 131,595 pounds {m}; but according to Dr. Cumberland {n}, who is more exact in his calculation, and who reckons a talent of silver at three hundred and fifty three pounds, eleven shillings, and ten pence halfpenny, and the value of gold to be fourteen times that of silver; so that a talent of gold is, with him, 5067 pounds, three shillings, and ten pence; wherefore this whole

sum of gold expended in the tabernacle, according to him, amounted to 148,719 pounds sterling: and, according to Waserus {o}, the amount of the whole is 350,920 Hungarian ducats, which make three tons and a half of gold, and nine hundred and twenty ducats: when one considers the distressed case of the Israelites in Egypt, their late deliverance from thence, and the desert in which they were, it may be wondered how they came by these riches, here and after mentioned; but when it is observed, the riches of their ancestors, particularly what Joseph got in Egypt, which descended to their posterity; the repayment of the labour of the Israelites at their departure, with what they borrowed of the Egyptians, and what they found upon their carcasses when cast up by the Red sea, it will in a good measure be accounted for; to which may be added, that, according to Jerom {p}, there were, eleven miles from Mount Horeb in the wilderness, fruitful mountains of gold; called Catachrysea.

{m} De Ponder. & pretiis. Vet. Num. c. 4, 5. {n} Of Scripture Weights and Measures, c. 4. p. 120, 121. {o} De Antiqu. Numis. l. 2. c. 18. {p} De locis Heb. fol. 90. A.

Exodus 38:25

Ver. 25. **And the silver of them that were numbered of the congregation,....** This was not the offering of silver,

[Ex 35:24](#) but what was collected in numbering the people, where everyone of twenty years old and upwards paid half a shekel,

[Ex 30:12](#) the sum

[was] an hundred talents, one thousand seven hundred and threescore fifteen shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; which, according to Brerewood {q}, make of our money, 37,721 pounds, seventeen shillings, and six pence; according to Waserus {r}, the whole amounted to 150,887 dollars and a half: and so, according to Lundius {s}, the sum is so many imperials, and forty five creutzers or cross pennies.

{q} Ut supra. (De Ponder & pretiis Vet. Num. c. 4, 5.) {r} Ut supra. (De Antiqu. Numis. l. 2. c. 18.) {s} Apud Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 2. p. 253.

Exodus 38:26

Ver. 26. **A bekah for every man, [that is], half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary,....** A half shekel was called a "bekah", from eqb, "bakah", to divide; because it was a shekel divided into two parts:

for everyone that went to be numbered, from twenty years and upwards; in order to give a ransom, and make an atonement for their souls, as was ordered [Ex 30:12](#)

for six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty [men]; so that from the time of their coming out of Egypt, which was now about six months ago, there was an increase of 3550 of the above age; see [Ex 12:37](#).

[Exodus 38:27](#)

Ver. 27. **And of the hundred talents of silver were cast the sockets of the sanctuary, and the sockets of the vail,**.... The sockets for the boards of the tabernacle, into which they were put; and the sockets for the vail, which divided between the holy and the most holy place, in which the pillars were set the vail was hung upon, and which was the silver foundation of the whole fabric:

one hundred sockets of the one hundred talents, a talent for a socket; there were ninety six sockets for the sanctuary or tabernacle, and four for the vail; and on each of these a talent of silver was expended; which, according to Dr. Cumberland, was three hundred and fifty three pounds, eleven shillings, and some odd pence; so much every socket cost.

[Exodus 38:28](#)

Ver. 28. **And of the thousand seven hundred seventy five [shekels],**.... Which remained of the sum collected, [Ex 38:25](#) after the silver sockets were cast:

he made hooks for the pillars: on each side of the court of the tabernacle on which the hangings were hung; these hooks, as Kimchi says {t}, were in the form of the letter w, and were made to hang the sacrifices upon, when they took their skins off; and so it is said in the Misnah {u}, that there were iron hooks fixed in the walls and pillars, on which they hung (the passover lambs) and skinned them; this was done in the second temple, when the hooks, it seems, were iron, but those of the tabernacle were silver:and overlaid their chapiters, and filleted them; that is, overlaid the heads, tops, or knobs of the pillars with silver plates, and filleted, girded, or hooped other parts of them with silver. {t} Sepher Shorash. Rad. ww. {u} Pesachim, c. 5. sect. 9. Exodus 38:29Ver. 29. **And the brass of the offering was seventy talents, and two thousand four hundred shekels.** Which, according to Paris weight, were 6177 pounds, ten ounces, two drachms, and sixty four grains {w}: this might be had from the neighbouring mountains of Arabia, where it is said {x} the metals of brass and iron

were first dug. {w} Vid. Scheuchzer, ut supra. (Physic. Sacr. vol. 2. p. 253.) {x}
Aristeas de 72. interpret. p. 42. Vid. Hieron. de loc. Hebr. fol. 90. A. Exodus
38:30 Ver. 30. And therewith he made the sockets to the door of the tabernacle of the
congregation,.... Which were five; see Ex 26:37 and the brazen altar, and the brazen
grate for it, and all the vessels of the altar; which were all made of brass; see Ex 27:2.
Exodus 38:31 Ver. 31. And the sockets of the court round about, and the sockets of the
court gate,.... These were also of brass, in all sixty: and all the pins of the tabernacle,
and all the pins of the court round about; the pins for the curtains of the tabernacle,
and for the hangings of the court; see Ex 27:19.

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 39:1](#)

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 39

In this chapter is continued the account of making the several things belonging to the sanctuary, particularly the clothes for the service of the tabernacle, and the garments of the priests, as the ephod and its curious girdle, [Ex 39:1](#) the breastplate and the putting of the stones in it, and the fastening of it to the ephod, [Ex 39:8](#) the robe of the ephod, with the bells and pomegranates to it, [Ex 39:21](#) and the coats, mitre, bonnets, breeches, and girdle of fine linen, for Aaron and his sons, [Ex 39:27](#) and the golden plate, [Ex 39:30](#) and all being finished, the tabernacle and everything belonging to it were brought to Moses, and viewed by him; who seeing that all was done exactly according to the commandment of the Lord, blessed the people, and particularly the artificers, [Ex 39:38](#).

Ver. 1. **And of the blue, and purple, and scarlet, they made cloths of service,**.... Jarchi observes that there is no mention made of linen, because these were not the priestly garments in which there was linen; but these were they with which they covered the vessels of the sanctuary when they journeyed; and so says Aben Ezra; and those were covered with cloths of blue, purple, and scarlet, [Nu 4:5](#) though some think these were clothes wore by the priests:

to do service in the holy place: and which they only wore when in it, and employed in the service of it; and therefore what follows must be by way of explanation:

and made the holy garments for Aaron, as the Lord commanded Moses; the particulars of which are given in the following verses.

[Exodus 39:2](#)

Ver. 2-31. **And he made the ephod of gold,**.... From hence to the end of verse thirty one we have a very particular account of the making of the priest's garments exactly according to the directions given to Moses, See Gill on "Ex 28:1" &c. to end of chapter twenty eight; only it may be observed, that here in [Ex 39:3](#) an account is given of the manner in which they made the gold fit to be worked along with the blue, purple, and scarlet yarn; they beat the gold into thin plates, and then cut them into wires, and then twisted them together with the yarn: the gold that was used in the

weaving of the ephod and the breastplate, spoken of in the law, was wrought after this manner; the workman took one thread of pure gold, and put it with six threads of blue, and twisted the seven threads as one, and so he wrought a thread of gold with six of purple, and another thread with six of scarlet, and another with six of linen or flax, so that there were four threads of gold, and all the threads were twenty eight, as it is said; "they did beat" or spread out "the gold", &c. "to work in the midst of blue", &c. from whence is learnt that the thread of gold was twisted in the midst of them {y}: and it may be further observed, that after the enumeration of the stones in the breastplate, [Ex 39:10](#) no mention is made of the Urim and Thummim, which seems to confirm the opinion of many, and which is my own, that they are the same with the stones: moreover, in [Ex 39:28](#), it may be observed, that what the coats for the common priests were made of is expressed, which is not before, which was linen; expressive of their purity and holiness, and in which they ought always to appear before God and man, and in which apparel they have been imitated among the Heathens: the priests of Hercules are said to be clothed with linen {z}, and the Egyptian priests wore only a linen garment {a}; hence the priests of Isis, with whom she is represented as surrounded by Juvenal {b}, are called by him "grex liniger", and by Martial, "linigeri" {c}.

{y} Maimon. Cele Hamikdash, c. 9. sect. 5. {z} Silius Ital. de Bell. Punic. l. 3. {a} Herodot. Euterpe sive, l. 2. c. 38. {b} Satyr. 6. {c} L. 12. Epigram. 26.

[Exodus 39:3](#)

Ver. 3. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

[Exodus 39:4](#)

Ver. 4. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

[Exodus 39:5](#)

Ver. 5. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

[Exodus 39:6](#)

Ver. 6. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

[Exodus 39:7](#)

Ver. 7. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

[Exodus 39:8](#)

Ver. 8. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

[Exodus 39:9](#)

Ver. 9. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

[Exodus 39:10](#)

Ver. 10. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

[Exodus 39:11](#)

Ver. 11. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

[Exodus 39:12](#)

Ver. 12. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

[Exodus 39:13](#)

Ver. 13. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

[Exodus 39:14](#)

Ver. 14. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:15

Ver. 15. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:16

Ver. 16. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:17

Ver. 17. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:18

Ver. 18. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:19

Ver. 19. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:20

Ver. 20. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:21

Ver. 21. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:22

Ver. 22. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:23

Ver. 23. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:24

Ver. 24. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:25

Ver. 25. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:26

Ver. 26. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:27

Ver. 27. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:28

Ver. 28. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:29

Ver. 29. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:30

Ver. 30. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

Exodus 39:31

Ver. 31. See Gill on "Ex 39:2".

[Exodus 39:32](#)

Ver. 32. Thus was all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation finished,.... Both the tabernacle, consisting of the court, the holy place, and the most holy place, and the tent or covering that was over it, with all things appertaining to the service of it, as before described:

and the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did they: both the people in general, and the artificers in particular; the people brought gold, silver, and brass, &c. as was proposed to them; and the artificers wrought these and all other things, according to the directions and instructions they received.

[Exodus 39:33](#)

Ver. 33-42. And they brought the tabernacle unto Moses,.... That is, the several parts of it before it was put together, with all its furniture, and everything appertaining to it; which are examined in the order in which they were directed to be made, from hence to the end of [Ex 39:42](#) and this was done, that Moses might inspect the whole, and see whether it was done according to the pattern shown him, and the instructions he had given to the workmen.

[Exodus 39:34](#)

Ver. 34. See Gill on "Ex 39:33".

[Exodus 39:35](#)

Ver. 35. See Gill on "Ex 39:33".

[Exodus 39:36](#)

Ver. 36. See Gill on "Ex 39:33".

[Exodus 39:37](#)

Ver. 37. See Gill on "Ex 39:33".

[Exodus 39:38](#)

Ver. 38. See Gill on "Ex 39:33".

[Exodus 39:39](#)

Ver. 39. See Gill on "Ex 39:33".

[Exodus 39:40](#)

Ver. 40. See Gill on "Ex 39:33".

[Exodus 39:41](#)

Ver. 41. See Gill on "Ex 39:33".

[Exodus 39:42](#)

Ver. 42. See Gill on "Ex 39:33".

[Exodus 39:43](#)

Ver. 43. **And Moses did look upon all the work,**.... Made a survey of it, and with great care and accuracy examined every particular thing, and the manner in which it was finished:

and, behold, they had done it as the Lord had commanded, even so had they done it; both as to matter and manner in every point, on all accounts, just as they were ordered and directed; they being throughout the whole filled by the Spirit of God with wisdom and understanding, to do everything just as it was the will and pleasure of God it

should be done:

and Moses blessed them; commended them for what they had done, and implored the divine blessing upon them; and which may be understood both of the people who had so liberally and plentifully contributed to this good work, and of the artificers who had so carefully and punctually performed it. The form of blessing, as the Targum of Jonathan gives it, is,

"may the Shechinah (or the divine Majesty) of the Lord dwell in the works of your hands;"

or as Jarchi expresses it,

"may it be the pleasure (of God) that the Shechinah may dwell in the works of your hands, and the beauty of the Lord our God may be upon us, &c."

which last words were part of the prayer of Moses, [Ps 90:17](#).

[John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.](#)

[Exodus 40:1](#)

INTRODUCTION OF EXODUS 40

This chapter contains the order for setting up the tabernacle, and placing the furniture of it where it was the will of God it should be put, [Ex 40:1](#) and for the anointing it, and all its vessels, and also Aaron and his sons, [Ex 40:9](#) all which were accordingly done, the tabernacle was reared up, and everything was put in its proper place, [Ex 40:16](#) upon which a cloud covered the tent, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, so that Moses could not enter; which cloud afterwards was a direction in their journeys, by night and by day, [Ex 40:34](#).

Ver. 1. **And the Lord spake unto Moses**,.... When the tabernacle, and the work of it, were finished, and he had taken a survey of it, and everything belonging to it, which appeared to be done as was ordered:

saying; as follows.

[Exodus 40:2](#)

Ver. 2. **On the first day of the first month**,.... Which was the month Nisan, as the Targum of Jonathan expresses it; which was the month the children of Israel came out of Egypt, out of which they had now been a whole year, excepting fourteen days:

shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation; the tabernacle, which had a tent or covering over it, to which the people were gathered at times for religious service.

[Exodus 40:3](#)

Ver. 3. **And thou shall put therein the ark of the testimony**,.... The ark or chest where the law was, a testimony of the divine will, and which was to be put into the most holy place of the tabernacle:

and cover the ark with the vail; not with the propitiatory or mercy seat, as the Targum of Jonathan; for though that was a covering or lid to the ark, yet not a vail; this was the vail that divided between the holy place and the most holy, and so covered or hid

the ark from the sight even of the priests that went into the holy place.

Exodus 40:4

Ver. 4. **And thou shall bring in the table**,.... The table of shewbread, which was to be set in the holy place:

and set in order the things that are to be set in order upon it; besides the dishes, spoons, covers, and bowls, there were the twelve loaves of shewbread to be set in two rows:

and thou shall bring in the candlestick, and light the lamps thereof; which was to be brought and set in the same holy place with the shewbread table; and though the lamps were to be lighted by Aaron, the priest of the Lord, he being not yet consecrated, the office was performed by Moses.

Exodus 40:5

Ver. 5. **And thou shalt set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the testimony**,.... Not in the most holy place where the ark was, but over against it in the holy place:

and put the hanging of the door of the tabernacle; the door of entrance into the holy place, where there were to be no other things set but those now mentioned, the shewbread table, the candlestick, and the altar of incense; and these being brought in, the hanging was to be put up, which hid the sight of the above things, and forbid the entrance of the people there.

Exodus 40:6

Ver. 6. **And thou shall set the altar of the burnt offering**,.... Where the sacrifices of the people were to be brought, and offered up by the priests; and this was to be set up in the open court, as it was proper it should, both because of the smell and smoke of the sacrifices:

before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation; just a little before the entrance into the holy place.

Exodus 40:7

Ver. 7. **And thou shall set the laver,**.... As is directed in [Ex 30:18](#).

Exodus 40:8

Ver. 8. **And thou shall set up the court round about,**.... Which consisted of various hangings, east, west, north, and south; see [Ex 27:9](#).

Exodus 40:9

Ver. 9-11. **And thou shall take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle,**.... In this, and the two following verses [Ex 40:10](#), orders are given for the anointing of the tabernacle and its vessels, the altar of burnt offering and its vessels, the laver and its foot, whereby they were consecrated for divine use and service, according to [Ex 30:26](#)

Exodus 40:10

Ver. 10. See Gill on "Ex 40:9".

Exodus 40:11

Ver. 11. See Gill on "Ex 40:9".

Exodus 40:12

Ver. 12-14. **And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation,**.... To wash, anoint, and clothe them, as in the two following verses [Ex 40:13](#), that they might minister in the priest's office, according to [Ex 28:41](#)

Exodus 40:13

Ver. 13. See Gill on "Ex 40:12".

[Exodus 40:14](#)

Ver. 14. See Gill on "Ex 40:12".

[Exodus 40:15](#)

Ver. 15. **And thou shall anoint them as thou didst anoint their father**,.... For Aaron was first anointed, and then his sons:

that they may minister unto me in the priest's office; which they might not do before their anointing, though separated for it, and called unto it:

for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations; that is, this ceremony of anointing was to be used in all ages at the investiture of the high priest with his office, until the Messiah should come, who would put an end to the Aaronic priesthood; for not common priests, only the successors of the high priest, were anointed in later times; this present unction serving for all the priests that should follow in successive generations, so long as the priesthood continued.

[Exodus 40:16](#)

Ver. 16. **Thus did Moses**,.... He set up the tabernacle, and every thing in its place, and anointed them, and Aaron and his sons:

according to all that the Lord commanded him, so did he; by which he approved himself to be a faithful servant in the house of God.

[Exodus 40:17](#)

Ver. 17. **And it came to pass in the first month, in the second year**,.... Of the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt;

on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared up; so that this was in the

spring of the year, about the vernal equinox, on a new year's day, that this was done, which was beginning the year well: it was within a fortnight of a year after their coming out of Egypt, and when they had been about five months and a half in building the tabernacle; for such a time it seems they were in doing that, and which, considering the many things to be done, and in the winter season, it shows great dispatch. Where was the place, in which the tabernacle was reared up, is not said: it is {d} observed, that near the southwest corner of that part of Mount Sinai, which is called Mount Episteme, there is a little hill called Araone by the Arabs, and by the Greeks the tabernacle of the testimony, where they say Aaron was consecrated, and first performed the offices of the priesthood: probably, says a learned man {e}, on this hill was placed the tabernacle of the congregation, which Moses was ordered to place without the camp afar off; but he seems to mistake the tent of Moses, or however the little tabernacle erected before the grand one was made, for this tabernacle in [Ex 33:7](#) which he seems to refer to; it is more probable that it was now reared up in the midst of the camp of Israel, see [Nu 2:2](#).

{d} Pocock's Travels, p. 147. {e} Clayton's Chronology of the Hebrew Bible, p. 350.

[Exodus 40:18](#)

Ver. 18. **And Moses reared up the tabernacle**,.... Not of himself, but with the help of others:

and fastened the sockets, and set up the boards thereof; fixed the silver sockets all around, which were the foundation of the building, and placed and established the shittim boards in them:

and put in the bars thereof; to keep the boards close and tight:

and reared up his pillars; the pillars that supported the vail between the holy and holy of holies, and those on which the hanging for the door of the tabernacle was put, as well as the several pillars all around the court of the tabernacle for the hangings of that.

[Exodus 40:19](#)

Ver. 19. **And he spread abroad the tent over the tabernacle**,.... Which were curtains of goats' hair:

and put the covering of the tent above upon it; which was of rams' skins died red, and over that another covering of badgers' skins:

as the Lord commanded Moses; [Ex 26:7](#).

Exodus 40:20

Ver. 20. And he took and put the testimony into the ark,.... The ten commands, called the "testimony", because they testified and declared what was the will of God with respect to things to be done, or not done. The Targum of Jonathan says, he put the broken pieces of the tables into it; but what became of them, or were done with them, we nowhere read; and it does not appear that any other, but those that Moses hewed by the order of God, were put into the ark; see [De 10:1](#)

and set the staves on the ark; that it might be ready to be carried whenever a remove was necessary:

and put the mercy seat above upon the ark; together with the cherubim.

Exodus 40:21

Ver. 21. And he brought the ark into the tabernacle,.... Into that part of it called the holy of holies:

and set up the vail of the covering, and covered the ark of the testimony; the vail which divided between the and most holy place, and so kept out of sight the ark of the testimony within, from being seen by any, even by the priests in the holy place:

as the Lord commanded Moses; [Ex 26:33](#).

Exodus 40:22

Ver. 22. And he put the table in the tent of the congregation,.... In the holy place; for there the shewbread table, which is here meant, was put:

upon the side of the tabernacle northward, without the vail; on the north side of the tabernacle, at a little distance from the walls, which were the curtains and boards, even in the holy place on the outside of the vail, which divided from the most holy

place.

Exodus 40:23

Ver. 23. **And he set the bread in order upon it before the Lord,**.... The shewbread, the twelve cakes of it, in two rows, six in a row:

as the Lord had commanded Moses: [Ex 25:30](#).

Exodus 40:24

Ver. 24. **And he put the candlestick in the tent of the congregation,**.... In the same place, the holy place: over against the table: the shewbread table:

on the side of the tabernacle southward: directly opposite to the table.

Exodus 40:25

Ver. 25. **And he lighted the lamps before the Lord,**.... The seven lamps belonging to it: this, though it was the business of the priests of Aaron, and his sons, yet they not being at present invested with their office, was done by Moses, who in this and several other things mentioned in this chapter officiated as a priest:

as the Lord commanded Moses, [Ex 25:37](#). Exodus 40:26 Ver. 26. And he put the golden altar,.... The altar of incense; so called because it was overlaid with gold, and to distinguish it from the altar of burnt offering, which was covered with brass: to this altar there is an allusion in Re 8:3 in the tent of the congregation, before the vail; in the same place, the holy place, where the shewbread table and candlestick were, and these were all the furniture of it; and this was put, not within the vail, but before it, over against the ark, as that stood within it, Ex 40:5. Exodus 40:27 Ver. 27. And he burnt sweet incense thereon,.... Which is another branch of the priestly office exercised by Moses, and which he would never have done had he not had a command from God for it, as follows: as the Lord commanded Moses; he commanded Moses indeed to order and direct Aaron to do this, but he being not yet consecrated, Moses, being the Lord's priest, did it. Exodus 40:28 Ver. 28. And he set up the hanging at the door of the tabernacle. That is, at the door of the holy place, all being brought into it that were to be placed there. Exodus 40:29 Ver. 29. And he put the altar of burnt offering by the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation,.... Of which see Ex 40:6 and

offered upon it the burnt offering and the meat offering; either the burnt offering the meat offering of the daily sacrifice, as Jarchi interprets it, see Ex 28:38 or it may be rather the burnt offering and meat offering of the consecration of Aaron and his sons, Ex 29:1 as the Lord commanded Moses; in the places referred to. Exodus 40:30 Ver. 30. And he set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar,.... Of which position, see Ex 30:18 and put water there to wash [withal]; for the priests to wash their hands and feet with; a type of that laver or fountain opened for the house of David and inhabitants of Jerusalem to wash in, Zec 13:1. Exodus 40:31 Ver. 31. And Moses, and Aaron, and his sons, washed their hands and their feet thereat. This laver was for the priests, and Moses, officiating as a priest, washed in it, with Aaron, and his sons, whom he was now about to consecrate to the priest's office, and invest with it by offering sacrifice for them; Jarchi says this was on the eighth day of the consecration. Exodus 40:32 Ver. 32. When they went into the tent of the congregation,.... Not only at this time, but at all other times: and when they came near unto the altar, they washed; to the altar of burnt offering to offer sacrifice; and also to the altar of incense, and burn incense on that; for before whatever service they performed in the tabernacle they washed: as the Lord commanded Moses; Ex 30:20 this phrase is near twenty times expressed in this and the preceding chapter, to show that everything was done by the workmen, and everything put in its proper place by Moses, exactly according to the will of God; no one pursuing his own fancy and private judgment, but all consulting the mind of God, and acting according to that. Exodus 40:33 Ver. 33. And he reared up the court round about the tabernacle and the altar,.... Which consisted of hangings one hundred cubits long and fifty broad; see Ex 27:9, &c. and set up the hanging of the court gate; which was at the east end of it; and the hanging was of twenty cubits, hung upon four pillars, Ex 27:16 so Moses finished the work; of the tabernacle, in making it by workmen, and in rearing it up by the help of others; and as the former was the work of some months, so the latter, it is highly probable, was the work of some days, at least, in doing all that is said to be done in this chapter relative to it; for though it is said to be reared up on the first day of the first month, yet not then fully set up, or everything done requisite to the use and service of it; see Nu 7:1. Exodus 40:34 Ver. 34. Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation,.... The outside of it; this cloud was the same with the pillar of cloud that went before the Israelites, as soon almost as they came out of Egypt; and led them through the Red sea, and conducted them to Mount Sinai; only it now appeared in a different form, not erect as a pillar, but more expanded, so as to cover the tabernacle without; and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle; the inside of it, not the most holy place only, but the holy place also: this was an uncommon brightness, lustre, and splendour, a glorious stream of light, which the eye of man could not well bear to behold; such a glory filled the temple of Solomon at the dedication of that, 1Ki 8:11 and was an emblem of Christ, the brightness of his Father's glory, dwelling in and filling the tabernacle of the human nature, where the Godhead, the Shechinah, the

divine Majesty, dwells bodily, Heb 1:3 Col 2:9. Exodus 40:35 Ver. 35. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation,.... He had been there before, both in the holy, and in the most holy place, to see that the furniture of each were put as the Lord directed, which being done he came out again; and now a cloud being on the outside of it, and the glory of the Lord within, he was so struck with an awe and reverence of the divine Being, of whose presence these were a symbol, that he could not engage his heart, or had not boldness to go into the tabernacle until he was called, Le 1:1 for so it follows: because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle; there was something, no doubt, very venerable in the spreading cloud, as well as very striking in the refulgent glory, which commanded distance, even to a person that had been used to converse with God; Moses, that went into the midst of the cloud where the Lord was, now could not or durst not go into the tabernacle it covered; and he who then was not deterred by the sight of the glory of God, which was like devouring fire, Ex 24:16 now could not, or at least thought it not proper and advisable to enter into the holy place erected for the service and worship of God; the chief reason of which may be, because, as yet, he had not a call to enter, as he then had, and as we find was afterwards given him, Le 1:1 and perhaps another reason may be, because he was now no longer a priest; Aaron and his sons being invested with the priestly office, whose business it was to draw nigh to God; and indeed the call he afterwards had was not to come into the tabernacle, but was a call unto him out of it. Exodus 40:36 Ver. 36. And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle,.... By the Lord himself, or it removed by his order, that is, rose up and stood above the tabernacle, and appeared in the form of a pillar, and went before it: the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys; the motion of the cloud was a direction to set forward and continue their journey as long as it lasted; but when it rested and abode upon the tabernacle, then they stopped and rested also, as is suggested in the following verse Ex 40:37, see Nu 9:17 thus the saints are to be followers of God as dear children, and to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes or directs, and walk after the Spirit, the dictates and directions thereof; so the wheels in Ezekiel's vision went and stood, as did the living creatures, and the spirit in them, Eze 1:19. Exodus 40:37 Ver. 37. But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not,.... Even if it continued so two days, or a month, or a year, as very probably it sometimes did; which will in some measure account for the long continuance of the Israelites in the wilderness, see Nu 9:22 till the day that it was taken up: or, "of its ascent" {f}, being "lifted up", or going upwards, higher in the air, right over the tabernacle, or perhaps more to the front of it; the word used before in this and the preceding verse has the signification of ascending upwards. {f} wtleh "sustolli ejus", Montanus. Exodus 40:38 Ver. 38. For the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day,.... Or over it {g}, it covered it, when it abode upon it, and rested; and stood on high over it when it moved and the people journeyed: and fire was on it by night; the same phenomenon which had the appearance of a cloud in the day time shone like fire in the night time: or "fire was in

it" {h}; that is, in the cloud; so it appeared in the night, and was, as the Targum of Jonathan here calls it, a pillar of fire; the same with the pillar of cloud and fire, which departed not from the people all the while they were in the wilderness, Ex 13:21 and this was in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys; whether by night or by day; for in hot countries they travel much by night; and as the cloud was both a shelter from the heat of the sun in the daytime, and a direction of their way; so the fire by night was of the same use for direction, and might be also terrifying to wild beasts in the wilderness, who are afraid of fire, and so be a security to the Israelites from them; all which is an emblem of the guidance and protection, light, joy, and comfort, the church of God has from his gracious presence, while in the wilderness of this world; see Isa 4:5. {g} Nkvmh le "supra tabernaculum", Drusius. {h} wb "in ea"; Fagius, Junius & Tremellius; Drusius.

