

the second discourse to a treatise by

JOHN BUNYAN

entitled

**THE WORK OF JESUS CHRIST AS AN
ADVOCATE CLEARLY EXPLAINED
AND LARGELY IMPROVED FOR THE
BENEFIT OF ALL BELIEVERS**

*“And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the
Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1).*

Introduction Compiled & Edited by
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This treatise was published in London in 1689, one year after John Bunyan's death. Our reading of this work, as well as the preface and introduction come from a three volume collection edited by George Offor, Esq., and entitled, *The Whole Works of John Bunyan*. George Offor's edition of Bunyan's works was published in Glasgow in 1862.



John Bunyan was born in Elstow, England, near Bedford, on November 28, 1628. After squandering much of his life away in worldly wantonness, Bunyan was converted to the Christian faith and soon afterward, became an excellent expositor of the Holy Scriptures. He was imprisoned in November 1660 for the crime of preaching without a license from the state church. He remained incarcerated for twelve years, with only a few, and brief occasions of liberty. Though he began writing his famous *The Pilgrim's Progress* while in prison, Bunyan may have finished the work a few years after his release in 1672. *The Pilgrim's Progress* was published in 1678. Bunyan also wrote many other excellent works such as *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, *Some Gospel Truths Opened According to the Scriptures*, *A Vindication of Some Gospel Truths Opened*, and this treatise, *The Work of Jesus Christ as an Advocate Clearly Explained*. A contemporary with such men as John Owen, Thomas Goodwin, and Richard Baxter, John Bunyan is recognized as possibly one of the greatest of the Puritan writers. Bunyan died on August 31, 1688, after taking ill from traveling through inclement weather. He was buried at Bunhill Fields.

George Offor's "Advertisement By the Editor" and John Bunyan's "Epistle to the Reader" are not in our audio reading of Bunyan's treatise. They are, however, very worth the time to read. Both are included in the document provided with the first reading of this work.

I have also included some footnotes that I thought might be helpful, especially for 17th century legal terms. Still, my desire is to use the footnotes very sparingly, so as not to disturb the flow of this work; one in which I consider to be one of John Bunyan's most excellent expositions.

Bunyan's 2nd Discourse:

HOW CHRIST MANAGES THE OFFICE OF AN ADVOCATE

SECOND, I come now to show you how Jesus Christ doth manage this his office of an Advocate for us. And that I may do this to your edification, I shall choose this method for the opening of it—First. Show you how he manages this office with his Father. Second. I shall show you how he manages it before him against our adversary.

First. How he manages this his office of Advocate with his Father.

1. He doth it by himself, by no other as deputy under him, no angel, no saint; no work has place here but Jesus, and Jesus only. This the text implies: “We have an Advocate”; speaking of one, but one, one alone; without an equal or an inferior. We have but one, and he is Jesus Christ. Nor is it for Christ’s honour, nor for the honour of the law, or of the justice of God, that any but Jesus Christ should be an Advocate for a sinning saint. Besides, to assert the contrary, what doth it but lessen sin, and make the advocateship of Jesus Christ superfluous? It would lessen sin should it be removed by a saint or angel; it would make the advocateship of Jesus Christ superfluous, yea, needless, should it be possible that sin could be removed from us by either saint or angel.

Again; if God should admit of more advocates than one, and yet make mention of never an one but Jesus Christ; or if John should allow another, and yet speak nothing but of Jesus only; yea, that an advocate under that title should be mentioned but once, but once only in all the book of God, and yet that divers should be admitted, stands neither with the wisdom or love of God, nor with the faithfulness of the apostle. But saints have but one Advocate, if they will use him, or improve their faith in that office for their help, so; if not, they must take what follows. This I thought good to hint at, because the times are corrupt, and because ignorance and superstition always wait for a countenance with us, and these things have a natural tendency to darken all truth, so especially this, which bringeth to Jesus Christ so much glory, and yieldeth to the godly so much help and relief.

2. As Jesus Christ alone is Advocate, so God’s bar, and that alone, is that before which he pleads, for God is judge himself (Deuteronomy 32:36; Hebrews 12:23). Nor can the cause which now he is to plead be removed into any other court, either by appeals or otherwise.

Could Satan remove us from heaven, to another court, he would certainly be too hard for us, because there we should want our Jesus, our Advocate, to plead our cause. Indeed, sometimes he impleads us before men, and they are glad of the occasion, for they and he are often one; but then we have leave to remove our cause, and to pray for a trial in the highest court, saying, “Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal” (Psalm 17:2). This wicked world doth sentence us for our good deeds, but how then would they sentence us for our bad ones? But we will never appeal from heaven to earth for right, for here we have no Advocate; “our Advocate is with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”

3. As he pleadeth by himself alone, and nowhere else but in the court of heaven with the Father, so as he pleadeth with the Father for us, he observeth this rule—

(1.) He granteth and confesseth whatever can rightly be charged upon us; yet so as that he taketh the whole charge upon himself, acknowledging the crimes to be his own. “O God,” says he, “thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins”; my guiltiness “is not hid from thee” (Psalm 69:5). And this he must do, or else he can do nothing. If he hides the sin, or lesseneth it, he is faulty; if he leaves it still upon us, we die. He must, then, take our iniquity to himself, make it his own, and so deliver us; for having thus taken the sin upon himself, as lawfully he may, and lovingly doth, “for we are members of his body” (‘tis his hand, ‘tis his foot, ‘tis his ear hath sinned), it followeth that we live if he lives; and who can desire more? This, then, must be thoroughly considered, if ever we will have comfort in a day of trouble and distress for sin.

And thus far there is, in some kind, a harmony betwixt his being a sacrifice, a priest, and an Advocate. As a sacrifice, our sins were laid upon him (Isaiah 53:1-12). As a priest, he beareth them (Exodus 28:38). And as an Advocate, he acknowledges them to be his own (Psalm 69:5). Now, having acknowledged them to be his own, the quarrel is no more betwixt us and Satan, for the Lord Jesus has espoused our quarrel, and made it his. All, then, that we in this matter have to do, is to stand at the bar by faith among the angels, and see how the business goes. O blessed God! what a lover of mankind art thou! and how gracious is our Lord Jesus, in his thus managing matters for us.

(2.) The Lord Jesus having thus taken our sins upon himself, next pleads his own goodness to God on our behalf, saying, "Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel: because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face" (Psalm 69:6-7). Mark, let them not be ashamed for my sake, let them not be confounded for my sake. Shame and confusion are the fruits of guilt, or of a charge for sin, (Jeremiah 3:25), and are but an entrance into condemnation (Daniel 12:2; John 5:29). But behold how Christ pleads, saying, Let not that be for my sake, for the merit of my blood, for the perfection of my righteousness, for the prevalency of my intercession. Let them not be ashamed for my sake, O Lord God of hosts. And let no man object, because this text is in the Psalms, as if it were not spoken by the prophet of Christ; for both John and Paul, yea, and Christ himself, do make this psalm a prophecy of him. Compare Psalm 69:9 with John 2:17, and with Romans 15:3; and Romans 15:21 with Matthew 27:48, and Mark 15:25. But is not this a wonderful thing, that Christ should first take our sins, and account them his own, and then plead the value and worth of his whole self for our deliverance? For by these words, "for my sake," he pleads his own self, his whole self, and all that he is and has; and thus he put us in good estate again, though our cause was very bad.

To bring this down to weak capacities. Suppose a man should be indebted twenty thousand pounds, but has not twenty thousand farthings wherewith to pay; and suppose also that this man be arrested for this debt, and that the law also, by which he is sued, will not admit of a penny bate; this man may yet come well enough off, if his advocate or attorney will make the debt his own, and will, in the presence of the judges, out with his bags, and pay down every farthing. Why, this is the way of our Advocate. Our sins are called debts (Matthew 6:12). We are sued for them at the law (Luke 12:59). And the devil is our accuser; but behold the Lord Jesus comes out with his worthiness, pleads it at the bar, making the debt his own (Mark 10:45; 2 Corinthians 3:5). And saith, Now let them not be ashamed for my sake, O Lord God of hosts: let them not be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel. And hence, as he is said to be an Advocate, so he is said to be a propitiation, or amends-maker, or one that appeaseth the justice of God for our sins—"If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins."

And who can now object against the deliverance of the child of God? God cannot; for he, for Christ's sake, according as he pleaded, hath forgiven us all trespasses (Colossians 2:13; Ephesians 4:32). The devil cannot; his mouth is stopped, as is plain in the case of Joshua (Zechariah 3:1-10). The law cannot; for that approveth of what Christ has done. This, then, is the way of Christ's pleading. You must know, that when Christ pleads with God, he pleads with a just and righteous God, and therefore he must plead law, and nothing but law; and this he

pleaded in both these pleas— First, in confessing of the sin he justified the sentence of the law in pronouncing of it evil; and then in his laying of himself, his whole self, before God for that sin, he vindicated the sanction and perfection of the law. Thus, therefore, he magnifies the law, and makes it honourable, and yet brings off his client safe and sound in the view of all the angels of God.

(3). The Lord Jesus having thus taken our sins upon himself, and presented God with all the worthiness that is in his whole self for them, in the next place he calleth for justice, or a just verdict upon the satisfaction he hath made to God and to his law. Then proclamation is made in open court, saying, “Take away the filthy garments from him,” from him that hath offended, and clothe him with change of raiment (Zechariah 3:1-10).

Thus the soul is preserved that hath sinned; thus the God of heaven is content that he should be saved; thus Satan is put to confusion, and Jesus applauded and cried up by the angels of heaven, and by the saints on earth. Thus have I showed you how Christ doth advocate it with God and his Father for us; and I have been the more particular in this, because the glory of Christ, and the comfort of the dejected, are greatly concerned and wrapped up in it. Look, then, to Jesus, if thou hast sinned; to Jesus, as an Advocate pleading with the Father for thee. Look to nothing else; for he can tell how, and that by himself, to deliver thee; yea, and will do it in a way of justice, which is a wonder; and to the shame of Satan, which will be his glory; and also to thy complete deliverance, which will be thy comfort and salvation.

Second, But to pass this and come to the second thing, which is, to show you how the Lord Jesus manages this his office of an Advocate before his Father against the adversary; for he pleadeth with the Father, but pleadeth against the devil; he pleadeth with the Father law and justice, but against the adversary he letteth out himself.

I say, as he pleads against the adversary, so he enlargeth himself with arguments over and besides those which he pleadeth with God his Father.

Nor is it meet or needful that our advocate, when he pleads against Satan, should so limit himself to matter of law, as when he pleadeth with his Father. The saint, by sinning, oweth Satan nothing; no law of his is broken thereby; why, then, should he plead for the saving of his people, justifying righteousness to him?

Christ, when he died, died not to satisfy Satan, but his Father; not to appease the devil, but to answer the demands of the justice of God; nor did he design, when he hanged on the tree, to triumph over his Father, but over Satan; “He redeemed us,” therefore, “from the curse of the law,” by his blood (Galatians 3:13). And from the power of Satan, by his resurrection (Hebrews 2:14). He delivered us from righteous judgment by price and purchase; but from the rage of hell by fight and conquest.

And as he acted thus diversely in the work of our redemption, even so he also doth in the execution of his Advocate’s office. When he pleadeth with God, he pleadeth so; and when he pleadeth against Satan, he pleadeth so; and how he pleadeth with God when he dealeth with law

and justice I have showed you. And now I will show you how he pleadeth before him against the “accuser of the brethren.”

1. He pleads against him the well-pleasedness that his Father has in his merits, saying, This shall please the Lord, or this doth or will please the Lord, better than anything that can be propounded (Psalm 69:31). Now this plea being true, as it is, being established upon the liking of God Almighty; whatever Satan can say to obtain our everlasting destruction is without ground, and so unreasonable. “I am well pleased,” saith God (Matthew 3:17); and again, “The Lord is well pleased for his (Christ’s) righteousness’ sake” (Isaiah 42:21). All that enter actions against others pretend that wrong is done, either against themselves or against the king. Now Satan will never enter an action against us in the court above, for that wrong by us has been done to himself; he must pretend, then, that he sues us, for that wrong has, by us, been done to our king. But, behold, “We have an Advocate with the Father,” and he has made compensation for our offences. He gave himself for our offences. But still Satan maintains his suit; and our God, saith Christ, is well pleased with us for this compensation-sake, yet he will not leave off his clamour. Come, then, says the Lord Jesus, the contention is not now against my people, but myself, and about the sufficiency of the amends that I have made for the transgressions of my people; but he is near that justifieth me, that approveth and accepteth of my doings, therefore shall I not be confounded. Who is mine adversary? Let him come near me! Behold, “the Lord God will help me” (Isaiah 50:7-9). Who is he that condemneth me? Lo, they all shall, were there ten thousand times as many more of them, wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up. Wherefore, if the Father saith Amen to all this, as I have showed already that he hath and doth, the which also further appeareth, because the Lord God has called him the Saviour, the Deliverer, and the Amen; what follows, but that a rebuke should proceed from the throne against him? And this, indeed, our Advocate calls for from the hand of his Father, saying, O enemy, “the Lord rebuke thee”; yea, he doubles this request to the judge, to intimate his earnestness for such a conclusion, or to show that the enemy shall surely have it, both from our Advocate, and from him before whom Satan has so grievously accused us (Zechariah 3:1-10).

For what can be expected to follow from such an issue in law as this is, but sound and severe snibs from the judge upon him that hath thus troubled his neighbour, and that hath, in the face of the country, cast contempt upon the highest act of mercy, justice, and righteousness, that ever the heavens beheld? And all this is true with reference to the case in hand, wherefore, “The Lord rebuke thee,” is that which, in conclusion, Satan must have for the reward of his works of malice against the children, and for his contemning of the works of the Son of God. Now, our Advocate having thus established, by the law of heaven, his plea with God for us against our accuser, there is way made for him to proceed upon a foundation that cannot be shaken; wherefore, he proceedeth in his plea, and further urges against this accuser of the brethren.

2. God’s interest in this people; and prayeth that God would remember that: “The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee.” True, the church, the saints, are despicable in the world; wherefore men do think to tread them down; the saints are, also, weak in grace, but have corruptions that are strong, and, therefore, Satan, the god of this world, doth think to tread them down; but the saints have a God, the living, the eternal God, and, therefore, they shall not be trodden down; yea, they “shall be holden up, for God is able to make them stand” (Romans 14:4).

It was Haman's mishap to be engaged against the queen, and the kindred of the queen; it was that that made him he could not prosper; that brought him to contempt and the gallows. Had he sought to ruin another people, probably he might have brought his design to a desired conclusion; but his compassing the death of the queen spoiled all. Satan, also, when he fighteth against the church, must be sure to come to the worst, for God has a concern in that; therefore, it is said, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it"; but this hindereth not but that he is permitted to make almost what spoils he will of those that belong not to God. Oh, how many doth he accuse, and soon get out from God, against them, a license to destroy them! as he served Ahab, and many more. But this, I say, is a very great block in his way when he meddles with the children; God has an interest in them—"Hath God cast away his people? God forbid!" (Romans 11:1-2). The text intimates that they for sin had deserved it, and that Satan would fain have had it been so; but God's interest in them preserved them—"God hath not cast away his people, which he foreknew." Wherefore, when Satan accuseth them before God, Christ, as he pleadeth his own worth and merit, pleadeth also against him that interest that God has in them.

And though this, to some, may seem but an indifferent plea; for what engagement lieth, may they say, upon God to be so much concerned with them, for they sin against him, and often provoke him most bitterly? Besides, in their best state, they are altogether vanity, and a very thing of nought—"What is man (sorry man), that thou art mindful of him," or that thou shouldest be so?

I answer, Though there lieth no engagement upon God for any worthiness that is in man, yet there lieth a great deal upon God for the worthiness that is in himself. God has engaged himself with his having chosen them to be a people to himself; and by this means they are so secured from all that all can do against them, that the apostle is bold, upon this very account, to challenge all despite to do it's worst against them, saying, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" (Romans 8:33). Who? saith Satan; why, that will I. Ay, saith he, but who can do it, and prevail? "It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?" (Romans 8:34). By which words the apostle clearly declareth that charges against the elect, though they may be brought against them, must needs prove ineffectual as to their condemnation; because their Lord God still will justify, for that Christ has died for them. Besides, a little to enlarge, the elect are bound to God by a sevenfold cord, and a threefold one is not quickly broken.

(1.) Election is eternal as God himself, and so without variableness or shadow of change, and hence it is called "an eternal purpose," and a "purpose of God" that must stand (Ephesians 3:11; Romans 9:11).

(2.) Election is absolute, not conditional; and, therefore, cannot be overthrown by the sin of the man that is wrapped up therein. No works foreseen to be in us was the cause of God's choosing us; no sin in us shall frustrate or make election void—"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth" (Romans 8:33; 9:11).

(3.) By the act of election the children are involved, wrapped up, and covered in Christ; he hath chosen us in him; not in ourselves, not in our virtues, no, not for or because of anything, but of his own will (Ephesians 1:4-11).

(4.) Election includeth in it a permanent resolution of God to glorify his mercy on the vessels of mercy, thus foreordained unto glory (Romans 9:15, 18, 23).

(5.) By the act of electing love, it is concluded that all things whatsoever shall work together for the good of them whose call to God is the fruit of this purpose, this eternal purpose of God (Romans 8:28-30).

(6.) The eternal inheritance is by a covenant of free and unchangeable grace made over to those thus chosen; and to secure them from the fruits of sin, and from the malice of Satan, it is sealed by this our Advocate's blood, as he is Mediator of this covenant, who also is become surety to God for them; to wit, to see them forthcoming at the great day, and to set them then safe and sound before his Father's face after the judgment is over (Romans 9:23; Hebrews 7:22; 9:15, 17-24; 13:20; John 10:28-29).

(7.) By this choice, purpose, and decree, the elect, the concerned therein, have allotted them by God, and laid up for them, in Christ, a sufficiency of grace to bring them through all difficulties to glory; yea, and they, every one of them, after the first act of faith—the which also they shall certainly attain, because wrapped up in the promise for them—are to receive the earnest and first fruits thereof into their souls (2 Timothy 1:9; Acts 14:22; Ephesians 1:4, 5, 13, 14).

Now, put all these things together, and then feel if there be not weight in this plea of Christ against the devil. He pleads God's choice and interest in his saints against him—an interest that is secured by the wisdom of heaven, by the grace of heaven, by the power, will, and mercy of God, in Christ—an interest in which all the three Persons in the Godhead have engaged themselves, by mutual agreement and operation, to make good when Satan has done his all. I know there are some that object against this doctrine as false; but such, perhaps, are ignorant of some things else as well as of this. However, they object against the wisdom of God, whose truth it is, and against Christ our Advocate, whose argument, as he is such, it is; yea, they labour, what in them lieth, to wrest that weapon out of his hand, with which he so cudgelleth the enemy when, as Advocate, he pleadeth so effectually against him for the rescuing of us from the danger of judgment, saying, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee."

Third. As Christ, as Advocate, pleads against Satan the interest that his Father hath in his chosen, so also he pleads against him by no less authority—his own interest in them. "Holy Father," saith he, "keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me" (John 17:11). Keep them while in the world from the evil, the soul-damning evil of it. These words are directed to the Father, but they are leveled against the accusations of the enemy, and were spoken here to show what Christ will do for his, against our foe, when he is above. How, I say, he will urge before his Father his own interest in us against Satan, and against all his accusations, when he brings them to the bar of God's tribunal, with design to work our utter ruin. And is there not a great deal in it? As if Christ should say, Father, my people have an adversary who will accuse them for their faults before thee; but I will be their Advocate, and as I have bought them of thee, I will plead my right against him (John 10:28). Our English proverb is, Interest will not lie; interest will make a man do that which otherwise he would not. How many thousands are there for whom Christ doth not so much as once open his mouth, but leaves them to the accusations of

Satan, and to Ahab's judgment, nay, a worse, because there is none to plead their cause? And why doth he not concern himself with them? but because he is not interested in them—"I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine; and all mine are thine, and I am glorified in them" (John 17:9-10).

Suppose so many cattle in such a pound, and one goes by whose they are not, doth he concern himself? No; he beholds them, and goes his way. But suppose that at his return he should find his own cattle in that pound, would he now carry it toward them as he did unto the other? No, no; he has interest here, they are his that are in the pound; now he is concerned, now he must know who put them there, and for what cause too they are served as they are; and if he finds them rightfully there, he will fetch them by ransom; but if wrongfully, he will replevy them, and stand a trial at law with him that has thus illegally pounded his cattle.¹ And thus it is betwixt Jesus Christ and his. He is interested in them; the cattle are his own, "his own sheep," (John 10:3-4), but pounded by some other, by the law, or by the devil. If pounded by the law, he delivereth them by ransom; if pounded by the devil, he will replevy them, stand a trial at law for them, and will be, against their accuser, their Advocate himself. Nor can Satan withstand his plea, though he should against them join argument with the law; forasmuch, as has been proved before, he can and will, by what he has to produce and plead of his own, save his from all trespasses, charges, and accusations. Besides, all men know that a man's proper goods are not therefore forfeited, because they commit many, and them too great transgressions—"And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Now, the strength of this plea thus grounded upon Christ's interest in his people is great, and hath many weighty reasons on its side; as—

1. They are mine; therefore in reason at my dispose, not at the dispose of an adversary; for while a thing can properly be called mine, no man has therewith to do but myself; nor doth (a man, nor) Christ close his right to what he has by the weakness of that thing which is his proper right. He, therefore, as an Advocate, pleadeth interest, his own interest, in his people, and right must, with the Judge of all the earth, take place—"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25).

2. They cost him dear; and that which is dear bought is not easily parted with (1 Corinthians 6:20). They were bought with "his blood" (Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18-19). They were given him for his blood, and therefore are "dear children" (Ephesians 5:1); for they are his by the highest price; and this price he, as Advocate, pleadeth against the enemy of our salvation; yea, I will add, they are his, because he gave his all for them (2 Corinthians 8:9). When a man shall give his all for this or that, then that which he so hath purchased is become his all. Now Christ has given his all for us; he made himself poor for us, wherefore we are become his all, his fullness; and so the church is called (Ephesians 1:23). Nay, further, Christ likes well enough of his purchase, though it hath cost him his all—"The lines," says he, "are fallen to me in pleasant

¹ Bunyan uses the word "replevy," a legal term of Latin origin (*replegiablibis* and *replegiare*). According to Webster's 1828 Dictionary, "replevy" means "1. To take back, by a writ for that purpose cattle or goods that have been distrained, upon giving security to try the right of distraining in a suit at law, and if that should be determined against the plaintiff, to return the cattle or goods into the hands of the distrainer. In this case, the person whose goods are distrained becomes the plaintiff, and the person distraining the defendant or avowant.; 2. To bail."

places; I have a goodly heritage” (Psalm 16:6). Now, put all these things together, and there is a strong plea in them. Interest, such an interest, will not be easily parted with. But this is not all; for,

3. As they cost him dear, so he hath made them near to himself, near by way of relation. Now that which did not only cost dear, but that by way of relation is made so, that a man will plead heartily for. Said David to Abner, “Thou shalt not see my face, except thou first bring Michal, Saul’s daughter, when thou comest to see my face” (2 Samuel 3:13-14). Saul’s daughter cost me dear; I bought her with the jeopardy of my life; Saul’s daughter is near to me; she is my beloved wife. He pleaded hard for her, because she was dear and near to him. Now, I say, the same is true in Christ; his people cost him dear, and he hath made them near unto him; wherefore, to plead interest in them, is to hold by an argument that is strong.

(a.) They are his spouse, and he hath made them so; they are his love, his dove, his darling, and he accounts them so. Now, should a wretch attempt, in open court, to take a man’s wife away from him, how would this cause the man to plead! Yea, and what judge that is just, and knows that the man has this interest in the woman pleaded for, would yield to, or give a verdict for the wretch, against the man whose wife the woman is? Thus Christ, in pleading interest—in pleading “thou gavest them me”—pleads by a strong argument, an argument that the enemy cannot invalidate. True, were Christ to plead this before a Saul (1 Samuel 25:44), or before Samson’s wife’s father, the Philistine (Judges 14:20), perhaps such treacherous judges would give it against all right. But, I have told you, the court in which Christ pleads is the highest and the justest, and that from which there can be no appeal; wherefore Christ’s cause, and so the cause of the children of God, must be tried before their Father, from whose face, to be sure, just judgment shall proceed. But,

(b.) As they are called his spouse, so they are called his flesh, and members of his body. Now, said Paul to the church, “Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular” (1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 5:30). This relation also makes a man plead hard. Were a man to plead for a limb, or a member of his own, how would he plead? What arguments would he use? And what sympathy and feeling would his arguments flow from? I cannot lose a hand, I cannot lose a foot, cannot lose a finger; why, saints are Christ’s members, his members are of himself. With what strength of argument would a man plead the necessariness of his members to him, and the unnaturalness of his adversary in seeking the destruction of his members, and the deformity of his body! Yea, a man would shuck and cringe, and weep, and entreat, and make demurs,² and halts, and delays, to a thousand years, if possible, before he would lose his members, or any one of them.

But, I say, how would he plead and advocate it for his members, if judge, and law, and reason, and equity, were all on his side, and if, by the adversary, there could be nothing urged, but that against which the Advocate had long before made provision for the effectual overthrow thereof? And all this is true as to the case that lies before us. Thus we see what strength there lieth in this

² DEMUR, *v.i.*, In law, to stop at any point in the pleadings, and rest or abide on that point in law for a decision of the cause. Thus, the defendant may demur to the plaintiffs declaration, alledging it to be insufficient in law; the plaintiff may demur to the defendants plea, for a like reason. (Webster’s 1828 Dictionary)

second argument, that our Advocate bringeth for us against the enemy. They are his flesh and bones, his members; he cannot spare them; he cannot spare this, because, nor that, because, nor any, because, they are his members. As such, they are lovely to him; as such, they are useful to him; as such, they are an ornament to him; yea, though in themselves they are feeble, and through infirmity weak, much disabled from doing as they should. Thus, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." But,

4. As Christ, as Advocate, pleads for us, against Satan, his Father's interest in us, and his own; so he pleadeth against him that right and property that he hath in heaven, to give it to whom he will. He has a right to heaven as Priest and King; it is his also by inheritance; and since he will be so good a benefactor as to bestow this house on somebody, but not for their deserts, but not for their goodness, and since, again, he has to that end spilt his blood for, and taken a generation into covenant relation to him, that it might be bestowed on them; it shall be bestowed on them; and he will plead this, if there be need, if his people sin, and if their accuser seeks, by their sin, their ruin and destruction: "Father," saith he, "I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me" (John 17:24). Christ's will is the will of heaven, the will of God. Shall not Christ, then, prevail?

"I will," saith Christ; "I will," saith Satan; but whose will shall stand? It is true, Christ in the text speaks more like an arbitrator than an Advocate; more like a judge than one pleading at a bar. I will have it so; I judge that so it ought to be, and must. But there is also something of plea in the words both before his Father, and against our enemy; and therefore he speaketh like one that can plead and determine also; yea, like one that has power so to do. But shall the will of heaven stoop to the will of hell? Or the will of Christ to the will of Satan? Or the will of righteousness to the will of sin? Shall Satan, who is God's enemy, and whose charge wherewith he chargeth us for sin, and which is grounded, not upon love to righteousness, but upon malice against God's designs of mercy, against the blood of Christ, and the salvation of his people—I say, shall this enemy and this charge prevail with God against the well-grounded plea of Christ, and against the salvation of God's elect, and so keep us out of heaven? No, no; Christ will have it otherwise, he is the great donator, and his eye is good. True, Satan was turned out of heaven for that he sinned there, and we must be taken into heaven, though we have sinned here; this is the will of Christ, and, as Advocate, he pleads it against the face and accusation of our adversary. Thus, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." But,

5. As Christ, as Advocate, pleadeth for us, against Satan, his Father's interest in us, and his own, and pleadeth also what right he has to dispose of the kingdom of heaven; so he pleadeth against this enemy, that malice and enmity that is in him, and upon which chiefly his charge against us is grounded, to the confusion of his face. This is evident from the title that our Advocate bestows upon him, while he pleads for us against him: "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, O enemy," saith he; for Satan is an enemy, and this name given him signifies so much. And lawyers, in their pleas, can make a great matter of such a circumstance as this; saying, My lord, we can prove that what is now pleaded against the prisoner at the bar is of mere malice and hatred, that has also a long time lain burning and raging in his enemy's breast against him. This, I say, will greatly weaken the plea and accusation of an enemy. But, says Jesus Christ, "Father, here is a plea brought in against my Joshua, that clothes him with filthy garments, but it is brought in against him by an enemy, by an enemy in the superlative or highest degree. One that hates goodness

worse than he, and that loveth wickedness more than the man against whom at this time he has brought such a heinous charge.” Then leaving with the Father the value of his blood for the accused, he turneth him to the accuser, and pleads against him as an enemy: “O Satan, thou that accusest my spouse, my love, my members, art SATAN, an enemy.” But it will be objected that the things charged are true. Grant it; yet what law takes notice of the plea of one who doth professedly act as an enemy? because it is not done of love to truth, and justice, and righteousness, nor intended for the honour of the king, nor for the good of the prosecuted; but to gratify malice and rage, and merely to kill and destroy. There is, therefore, a great deal of force and strength in an Advocate’s pleading of such a circumstance against an accuser; especially when the crimes now charged are those, and only those for which the law, in the due execution of it, has been satisfied before; wherefore now a lawyer has double and treble ground or matter to plead for his client against his enemy. And this advantage against him has Jesus Christ.

Besides, it is well known that Satan, as to us, is the original cause of those very crimes for which he accuses us at the bar of God’s tribunal. Not to say anything of how he cometh to us, solicits us, tempts us, flatters us, and always, in a manner, lies at us to do those wicked things for which he so hotly pursues us to the bar of the judgment of God. For though it is not meet for us thus to plead,— to wit, laying that fault upon Satan, but rather upon ourselves,— yet our advocate will do it, and make work of it too before God. “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not” (Luke 22:31-32). He maketh here mention of Satan’s desires, by way of advantage against him; and, doubtless, so he did in his prayer with God for Peter’s preservation. And what he did here, while on earth, as a Saviour in general, that he doth now in heaven as a Priest and an Advocate in special.

I will further suppose that which may be supposed, and that which is suitable to our purpose. Suppose, therefore, that a father that has a child whom he loveth, but the child has not half that wit that some of the family hath, and I am sure that we have less wit than angels; and suppose, also, that some bad-minded neighbour, by tampering with, tempting of, and by unwearied solicitations, should prevail with this child to steal something out of his father’s house or grounds, and give it unto him; and this he doth on purpose to set the father against the child; and suppose, again, that it comes to the father’s knowledge that the child, through the allurements of such an one, has done so and so against his father; will he therefore disinherit this child? Yea, suppose, again, that he that did tempt this child to steal, should be the first that should come to accuse this child to its father for so doing, would the father take notice of the accusation of such an one? No, verily, we that are evil can do better than so; how then should we think that the God of heaven should do such a thing, since also we have a brother that is wise, and that will and can plead the very malice of our enemy that doth to us all these things against him for our advantage?— I say, this is the sum of this fifth plea of Christ our Advocate, against Satan. O Satan, says he, thou art an enemy to my people; thou pleadest not out of love to righteousness, not to reform, but to destroy my beloved and inheritance. The charge wherewith thou chargest my people is thine own (Job 8:4-6). Not only as to a matter of charge, but the things that thou accusest them of are thine, thine in the nature of them. Also, thou hast tempted, allured, flattered, and daily laboured with them, to do that for which now thou so willingly would have them destroyed. Yea, all this hast thou done of envy to my Father, and to godliness; of hatred to me and my people; and that thou mightest destroy others besides (1 Chronicles 21:1). And now,

what can this accuser say? Can he excuse himself? Can he contradict our Advocate? He cannot; he knows that he is a Satan, an enemy, and as an adversary has he sown his tares among the wheat, that it might be rooted up; but he shall not have his end; his malice has prevented him, and so has the care and grace of our Advocate. The tares, therefore, he shall have returned unto him again; but the wheat, for all this, shall be gathered into God's barn (Matthew 13:25-30).

Thus, therefore, our Advocate makes use, in his plea against Satan, of the rage and malice that is the occasion of the enemy's charge wherewith he accuseth the children of God. Wherefore, when thou readest these words, "O Satan," say with thyself, thus Christ our Advocate accuseth our adversary of malice and envy against God and goodness, while he accuseth us of the sins which we commit, for which we are sorry, and Christ has paid a price of redemption—"And (thus) if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." But,

6. Christ, when he pleads as an Advocate for his people, in the presence of God against Satan, he can plead those very weaknesses of his people for which Satan would have them damned, for their relief and advantage. "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" This is part of the plea of our Advocate against Satan for his servant Joshua, when he said, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan" (Zechariah 3:2). Now, to be a brand plucked out of the fire is to be a saint, impaired, weakened, defiled, and made imperfect by sin; for so also the apostle means when he saith, "And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 1:23). By fire, in both these places, we are to understand sin; for that it burns and consumes as fire (Romans 1:27). Wherefore a man is said to burn when his lusts are strong upon him; and to burn in lusts to others, when his wicked heart runs wickedly after them (1 Corinthians 7:9).

Also, when Abraham said, "I am but dust and ashes," (Genesis 18:27), he means he was but what sin had left; yea, he had something of the smutch and besmearings of sin yet upon him. Wherefore it was a custom with Israel, in days of old, when they set days apart for confession of sin, and humiliation for the same, to sprinkle themselves with, or to wallow in dust and ashes, as a token that they did confess they were but what sin had left, and that they also were defiled, weakened, and polluted by it (Esther 4:1-3; Jeremiah 6:26; Job 30:19; 42:6).

This, then, is the next plea of our goodly Advocate for us: O Satan, this is "a brand plucked out of the fire." As who should say, Thou objected against my servant Joshua that he is black like a coal, or that the fire of sin at times is still burning in him. And what then? The reason why he is not totally extinct, as tow;³ is not thy pity, but my Father's mercy to him; I have plucked him out of the fire, yet not so out but that the smell thereof is yet upon him; and my Father and I, we consider his weakness, and pity him; for since he is as a brand pulled out, can it be expected by my Father or me that he should appear before us as clear, and do our biddings as well, as if he had never been there? This is "a brand plucked out of the fire," and must be considered as such, and must be borne with as such. Thus, as Mephibosheth pleaded for his excuse, his lameness (2 Samuel 19:24-26), so Christ pleads the infirm and indigent condition of his people, against Satan, for their advantage. Wherefore Christ, by such pleas as these for his people, doth yet further show the malice of Satan (for all this burning comes through him), yea, and by it he

³ TOW, *n.* [L. *stupa.*] The coarse and broken part of flax or hemp, separated from the finer part by the hatchel or swingle. (Webster's 1828 Dictionary)

moveth the heart of God to pity us, and yet to be gentle, and long-suffering, and merciful to us; for pity and compassion are the fruits of the yearning of God's bowels towards us, while he considereth us as infirm and weak, and subject to slips, and stumbles, and falls, because of weakness.

And that Christ our Advocate, by thus pleading, doth turn things to our advantage, consider,

(1.) That God is careful, that through our weakness, our spirits do not fail before him when he chides (Isaiah 57:16-18).

(2.) "He stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind," and debates about the measure of affliction, when, for sin, we should be chastened, lest we should sink thereunder (Isaiah 27:7-9).

(3.) He will not strictly mark what is done amiss, because if he should, we cannot stand (Psalm 130:3).

(4.) When he threateneth to strike, his bowels are troubled, and his repentings are kindled together (Hosea 11:8-9).

(5.) He will spin out his patience to the utmost length, because he knows we are such bunglers at doing (Jeremiah 9:24).

(6.) He will accept of the will for the deed, because he knows that sin will make our best performances imperfect (2 Corinthians 8:12).

(7.) He will count our little a very great deal, for that he knows we are so unable to do anything at all (Job 1:21).

(8.) He will excuse the souls of his people, and lay the fault upon their flesh, which has greatest affinity with Satan, if through weakness and infirmity we do not do as we should (Mathew 26:41; Romans 7). Now, as I said, all these things happen unto us, both infirmities and pity, because, and for that we were once in the fire, and for that the weakness of sin abides upon us to this day. But none of this favour could come to us, nor could we, by any means, cause that our infirmities should work for us thus advantageously; but that Christ our Advocate stands our friend, and pleads for us as he doth.

But again, before I pass this over, I will, for the clearing of this, present you with a few more considerations, which are of another rank—to wit, that Christ our Advocate, as such, makes mention of our weaknesses so, against Satan, and before his Father, as to turn all to our advantage.

(1.) We are therefore to be saved by grace, because by reason of sin we are disabled from keeping of the law (Deuteronomy 9:5; Isaiah 64:6).

(2.) We have, given unto us, the Spirit of grace to help, because we can do nothing that is good without it (Ephesians 2:5; Romans 8:26).

(3.) God has put Christ's righteousness upon us to cover our nakedness with, because we have none of our own to do it withal (Philippians 3:7, 8; Ezekiel 16:8).

(4.) God alloweth us to ride in the bosom of Christ to the grave, and from thence in the bosom of angels to heaven, because our own legs are not able to carry us thither (Isaiah 40:11; 46:4; Psalm 48:14; Luke 16:22).

(5.) God has made his Son our Head, our Priest, our Advocate, our Saviour, our Captain, that we may be delivered from all the infirmities and all the fiends that attend us, and that plot to do us hurt (Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18; Hebrews 7:21).

(6.) God has put the fallen angels into chains (2 Peter 2:4; Revelation 20:1-2), that they might not follow us too fast, and has enlarged us (Psalm 4:1), and directed our feet in the way of his steps, that we may haste us to the strong tower and city of refuge for succour and safety, and has given good angels a charge to look to us (Hebrews 1:14; Psalm 34:7).

(7.) God has promised that we, at our counting days, shall be spared, "as a man spareth his own son that serveth him" (Malachi 3:17).

Now, from all these things, it appears that we have indulgence at God's hand, and that our weaknesses, as our Christ manages the matter for us, are so far off from laying a block or bar in the way to the enjoyment of favour, that they also work for our good; yea, and God's foresight of them has so kindled his bowels and compassion to us, as to put him upon devising of such things for our relief, which by no means could have been, had not sin been with us in the world, and had not the best of saints been "as a brand plucked out of the burning."

I have seen men (and yet they are worse than God) take most care of, and, also, best provide for, those of their children that have been most infirm and helpless; and our Advocate "shall gather his lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom"; yea, and I know that there is such an art in showing and making mention of weaknesses as shall make the tears stand in a parent's eyes, and as shall make him search to the bottom of his purse to find out what may do his weakling good. Christ, also, has that excellent art, as he is an Advocate with the Father for us; he can so make mention of us and of our infirmities, while he pleads before God, against the devil, for us, that he can make the bowels of the Almighty yearn towards us, and to wrap us up in their compassions. You read much of the pity, compassion, and of the yearning of the bowels of the mighty God towards his people; all which, I think, is kindled and made burn towards us, by the pleading of our Advocate. I have seen fathers offended with their children; but when a brother had turned a skillful advocate, the anger has been appeased, and the means have been concealed. We read but little of this Advocate's office of Jesus Christ, yet much of the fruit of it is extended to the churches; but as the cause of smiles, after offences committed, is made manifest afterwards, so at the day when God will open all things, we shall see how many times our Lord, as an Advocate, pleaded for us, and redeemed us by his so pleading, unto the enjoyments of smiles and embraces, who, for sin, but a while before, were under frowns and chastisements. And thus much for the making out how Christ doth manage his office of being an Advocate for us with the Father—"If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."