

Final Perseverance

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"I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand." John 10:28

Would you not be inclined to think that poor man, wretched and impotent as he is, would seize with delight upon the doctrine of final perseverance — a doctrine that secures to him the possession of eternal bliss, despite of all oppo-sition, all break-downs, all assaults from sin and Satan?

But it is not so. Man cavils at it, argues against it — in fact, hates it! How is this? Why thus, first, man thinks better of himself than he has any right to do; secondly, the thing is so contrary to all natural experience, that he persuades himself that it cannot be true; and, thirdly, he has sense enough to see that if he admits this doctrine, he cannot avoid the others of free grace. Hence he twists and distorts the scriptures that speak to the point, and with fatuity and madness clings to such passages as seem to favour his preconceived views.

The fact is that free grace is so utterly at vari-ance with man's every day experience, which sees every thing and person treated according to work-ing, and merit, and employment of talents, that he cannot receive God's plan of salvation.

Man must be doing, and working, earning his wages, meriting his reward, conquering his oppo-nents, and he has no notion of bounty, or mercy, or pity; and (though God knoweth, he expects very high wages for very sorry work) he flings from him with contempt the doctrines of grace, and sets out on his perilous journey to another world with a lie in his right hand!

Thanks be to Almighty God, some of us have been taught differently! We have been brought down from our high estate, and are humble sup-plicants at heaven's gate, awaiting the alms that a Sovereign God may be pleased to give us!

We will proceed now to discuss the subject of Final Perseverance. May our Triune God be with us!

I would first prove the doctrine by Scripture and argument; secondly, notice objections.

1. It is totally impossible for an elect vessel of mercy, having once had the grace of God, wholly to lose it, or finally to perish

What do the Scriptures say? Look into our text, John 10:28, 29. Can language be more to the point than this? Here is the solemn assurance of the Lord Jesus Christ that a certain portion of mankind, which He termed "sheep" and "my sheep", should never perish.

It is an absolute assertion. It is tantamount to the oath and promise of God. Yet our opponents will have it, notwithstanding this assurance, that the sheep may cease to be sheep, and of their own accord fly out of God's hand, though not be plucked out!

I should really be inclined to disbelieve that any rational being could descend to such contemptible evasion as this, had I not seen it somewhere in print. It seems to me to savour so much of what is termed Old Bailey quibbling, that it disgusts me. How intense must the hatred of truth be which could forge such an equivocation as this!

Such nonsense would disgrace a mere moral philosopher, not to speak of the glorious Lord. It would be tantamount to this: they shall never perish, if they do not perish!

Surely, He who spoke as never man spoke, He who in a moment disentangled the sophistries of scribes and lawyers, and put the astute Sadducees to silence, could not have delivered Himself so inconclusively as this! Perish the thought! The whole context goes to prove that the Shepherd's business is to make the sheep willing to abide under His saving protection, and that not one of them shall ever perish from external or internal assault. How sweet was the assurance of the Psalmist! "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want"! David knew from his own personal experience, with what untiring, unsleeping vigilance the shepherd watched and tended his sheep. He also, no doubt, had read of his fore-father Jacob's devotedness to his flock. How touching is the language of poor Jacob to Laban, see Genesis 31:38-40[1]. Ah! blessed be God, the great Shepherd of "the sheep" has watched and will watch over His own with greater vigilance than even Jacob or David watched for others.

Come now to Matthew 26:18. Here is a promise that the gates of hell, or the gates of death, shall never prevail against the Church.[2]

Now it is manifest that the Church is composed of individuals, and that "not prevailing against the Church", means not injuring it or destroying it. Assaults may be, and no doubt will be made; but they shall not succeed, they shall not prevail. But suppose an individual of that Church to be finally lost, the gates of hell have prevailed: and if one may be lost, all may

be lost, and thus Christ's assurance be no more than idle wind!

I would refer you to Matthew 24:24, for another proof of the point in hand. I understand this last clause to mean that it is impossible to deceive certain parties. I think that any un-prejudiced mind would agree to this interpretation. But [would you believe it?] the Arminians obtrude their impertinence even here! They say that the phrase "if it were possible", does not always denote an absolute impossibility, but only a difficulty in doing a thing, and they instance the passage in Acts 20:16, in proof.

To the reflecting mind, the superficiality or dishonesty of this gloss is apparent: but I have no doubt it would pass current amongst the un-thinking crowd. Alas! no wonder there are such multitudes of hypocrites, and ignorant professors, when there are so few thinkers.

We will now read this passage substituting the Arminian amendment, "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, with great difficulty, they shall deceive the very elect."

What an unwise speech! No man in his senses would talk thus. No. But let me untie this knot for you. Christ knew all future contingencies, Paul did not. Paul was in doubt whether he could be at Jerusalem on the feast-day; he could not unless he made great haste. Christ was not in doubt about the issue of the false prophets' teaching, for He foreknew all things; and evidently employed the phrase for the comfort of the elect, and to signify the absolute impossibility of their being deceived.

Look into Colossians 3:3; Romans 8:30-39; Philippians 1:6; 2 Timothy 2:19; 2 Thessalonians 3:3; Romans 11:29.

I am aware that this last passage is objected to as a proof of the doctrine in hand, because it has special allusion to the calling in of the Jews; but I wish to know, are Gentiles prohibited from receiving instruction, consolation, or warning, through any scripture that has reference to the Jews? If so, then it is in vain that the great mass of the Scripture is read or commented upon; it is in vain that men preach about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, and David, and Daniel, and a host of other Jews, saved by grace; it is in vain that we are told of types in sacrifices, and acts, and institutions, for Jews were specially connected with all these!

I grant that this passage (Romans 11:29) has special reference to the national privilege of the Jews, and does not pointedly speak of the immutable and eternal decree of the eternal election of individuals; yet it is a truth equally holds good when applied to the perseverance of the saints. Though it be meant of gifts and calling vouchsafed to the nation of the Jews, yet it is fitly applied to the gifts and calling vouchsafed to particular persons. We prove it thus: "If the Apostle from common grace do rightly conclude this irrevocableness in God, much more may it be determined

from that grace which is proper." If God's counsel, whereby He chose to Himself the peculiar nation of the Jews, remains firm, surely it follows that His counsel, whereby He chose certain individuals, must remain firm. We conclude from the less to the greater, e.g., if election to external and common privilege be without re-pentance on God's part, surely election to eternal and extraordinary privilege must be also without repentance.

But it may be objected, God rejected the Jews, and so He may reject individuals.

I answer, God has only rejected the Jews for a time, not for ever, for they will be brought again into a visible church state; and so He may hide His face from an elect vessel for a time, but can-not for ever; for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

Look into Isaiah 54:9, 10; Ezekiel 36:26; and Jeremiah 32:38-40. Now, think with me. These promises just read to you were made either to the Jews of the old dispensation, or to the Jews of a future time, or to the Church of God composed of Jews and Gentiles in all dispensations. Which is most likely?

If they were made to the Jews of the old dispensation, it is plain they were never fulfilled; if to the Jews of a future time, it is obvious that such Jews will need an Almighty Regenerator and Preserver, and if such Jews need such a Regenerator and Preserver, why should not the Gentiles or we? For how should it come to pass that we should have hearts less obstinate and stony than the Jews? Or why should it be necessary for God to undertake all this for the Jews and not for us? Can Gentiles do with less help from above than Jews? Nay, "There is no difference, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God", Romans 3:22, 23.

The fact is, those promises are not for the Jews of any dispensation, but for the Church at large, for the whole election of grace in all ages (see John 6:45; Hebrews 8:10). In those promises the elect are secured on both sides: God will never cast them off, and they shall never desert Him!

I will not detain you with further quotations; suffice it to say that it may be shown there are 600 passages of Scripture that might be brought forward to prove the point in hand.

I would now proceed to adduce a few arguments in proof of final perseverance.

1. If the Church were not preserved, the foundation of God's calling or election would be altogether shaken, calling being according to God's purpose, Romans 8:28. If every individual of the Church were not preserved, Christ might possibly have no Church: for where one may perish, all might perish.

2. If the Church were not preserved, Christ's fidelity would be impeachable: for He undertook the care of each and every member of it, John 6:39.

3. If the Church were not preserved, the covenant of grace would not be ordered in all things and sure (2 Samuel 23:5), but would be liable to be made null and void like any other covenant.

4. If the Church were not preserved, the union of the saints with Christ would be a mockery and a nonentity, and Christ's saying would be meaningless, "Because I live, ye shall live also; and in that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you", John 14:19, 20.

5. If the Church were not preserved, the efficacy of Christ's intercession would be frustrated, John 11:42; 17:9; Luke 22:31, 32.[3]

6. If the Church were not preserved, the pro-mise of the Spirit to be with her for ever would not be true, John 14:16.

7. If the Church were not preserved, the saints would have no reason to rejoice on earth, Philippians 3:1 and 4:4. How could any man rejoice if he were not sure but at the last gasp he might fail and fall away?

I dare say some of our sceptical friends will even here object, and say, "But the saints are ex-horted to fear." To whom I reply, go and learn what is the distinction between slavish and reverential fear. The one the saints need not have, for they are delivered into the glorious liberty of the sons of God; the other they shall have, for God has pro-mised, Jeremiah 32:40.

8. If the Church were not preserved, the sacred Trinity would all be baffled! For the Father predestinated the Church to eternal salvation, Romans 8:28. The Son purchased the Church with the most dreadful horrors of soul, and an accursed death, Galatians 3:13. The Holy Spirit takes possession of the hearts of the elect, making each willing in the day of Christ's power, Psalm 110:3.

But if the Church be not preserved the Trinity is cheated out of that which It set Its eyes and desires upon, and nature is proclaimed victor, the creature overpowering the Creator!

9. I might confirm all that has been already said by reminding you of the various similitudes by which the elect, the Church, the saints are re-presented in the Scriptures. They are the Lord's own portion, and the lot of His inheritance, Deuteronomy 32:9; His jewels, Malachi 3:17; set as a seal upon His heart and on His arm, Song of Solomon 8:6; graven on the palms of His hands, and their walls are continually before Him, Isaiah 49:16; they are members of Christ's body, of His flesh, and of His bones, Ephesians 5:30, Colossians 1:18; living branches of the true vine, John 15:1, 2; the espoused to Christ, the Bridegroom, John 3:29; 2 Corinthians

11:2; they are the Lord's building, founded on the Rock of ages, 1 Corinthians 3:9; Isaiah 26:4, and Matthew 7:24; they are surrounded by God Himself as a wall of fire, Zechariah 2:5; and their place of defence is the munition of rocks, Isaiah 33:16; their faith is more precious than gold that perisheth, 1 Peter 1:7; their hope as an anchor, sure and stedfast, cast within the veil, whither Christ as their forerunner is for them entered, Hebrews 6:19; and where they ultimately must behold the glory which the Father hath given unto Christ, John 17:24.

I need not go further. They who are unmoved by these scriptures and arguments would not believe though one rose from the dead.

2. I would now consider some of the chief objections that are urged against this doctrine

Objection. — What, then, is the use of the exhortations, warnings, and threatenings of the Scriptures? What avails exhorting me to take heed lest I fall, if I am sure this will never be the case?

Answer. — First. An exhortation to duty is perfectly consistent with an absolute promise of grace to aid in the discharge of it. This is manifest from Scripture, e.g. in one place we are commanded to love the Lord our God with all our heart; in another, God says, "I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, &c."

Now, either these must be consistent with each other, or the Spirit of God must contradict Himself! Which is the more likely? Is it not far more likely that man misunderstands, and cannot fathom the Scriptures, than that the Scriptures should be inconsistent with themselves?

Secondly. Warning is needful even for believers, for it is an incitement to faith and prayer. When the saint perceives such or such an admonition or warning in the Scriptures, he involuntarily breaks out in prayer to God to impress it upon his mind, and to keep him from the evil.

Thirdly. The Apostles preached or wrote to visible churches, in which were sound and unsound professors. The warnings kept the one in proper fear, and left the others without excuse.

Fourthly. The exhortations, warnings, and commands of the Bible "God's ifs and imperative moods", says Luther, "are intended to declare what ought to be done rather than what men have it in their power to do."

"The exhortations of the Scriptures", observes another old divine, "are rather to be understood as intimations of our duty, than of our ability — of what we ought to be, rather than of what we have the power to be. At most they can signify no more on our part than the actual exercise of Divine

grace when received, and that under the direction of the Divine will; for, Job 9:30-33; Proverbs 20:9.

Fifthly. They are all means in God's hands for the carrying out of His purposes, and per-petually to keep the lesson before men, "No flesh shall glory in His presence."

Objection. The absolute promises, so called, should be interpreted by the conditional, e.g., when God says, "I will never depart from you to do you good," we should understand Him to say, "If you will not depart from Me."

Answer. What use, then, would there be in such promises at all? Would not this be the revival of the covenant of works, and a placing man under far more disadvantageous circum-stances than Adam in Eden? Where then, Grace? If man is to be saved by observance of conditions, he is to be saved by works, and then the Scriptures are contradicted, Romans 9:6; Free grace has no place, and the whole economy of God's salvation, and God's righteousness is upset! But here is the solution, we must place the conditional promises first, the absolute second, e.g.,

If ye continue, ye shall be saved;

But ye shall continue,

Therefore, ye shall be saved.

Reverse this, and it will be nonsense, e.g.,

Ye shall continue;

But if ye continue not,

Ye shall not be saved.

What is this but incoherent, inconclusive absur-dity? In fact it amounts to this, viz. — if ye con-tinue, ye shall continue! or, as was observed a little while ago — ye shall never perish, if ye never perish!

In truth all the commands of God are inlaid with gospel promises, e.g., Where the command is, "know the Lord", the promise is, "they shall all know Me, saith the Lord", Jeremiah 31:34; where the command is "come unto Me", Matthew 11:28, the promise is, "they shall come", Psalm 22:31; where the command is, "love the Lord", Psalm 31:23, the promise is, "the Lord will circum-cise thine heart to love the Lord", Deuteronomy 30:6; where the command is, "fear God", 1 Peter 2:17, the promise is, "I will put My fear in their hearts", Jeremiah 32:40; where the command is, be "meek, humble, lowly", Matthew 11:29, the promise is, "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and a little child shall lead them", Isaiah 11:6. And thus it is in all other cases, as appears from Hebrews 8:10.

Objection. But what do you make of the 18th chapter of Ezekiel?

Answer. I'll tell you what I make of it. I make it out to be the awful law of God, and I see written underneath every portion of it, "Cursed is he that continueth not in all things written in the law to do them."

Have you got no farther on the road than this? O shame, shame! That you should have ever called yourself a Christian! Whosoever will enter into such a covenant with God as is here drawn up, will assuredly find himself in hell, i.e., supposing eternal life to be here spoken of.

Dr. Gill thinks that it is temporal calamity and affliction to which allusion is here made. Be this as it may, it is the grossest ignorance to argue from the command of God to power in man. God commands, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." Shall we conclude that we can be holy as God? God forbid! The design of exhortations like this is to convince men of their want of holiness, of their want of clean hearts and new spirits, which God has promised to give to His own elect. And that man who seizes upon such a scripture as the 18th chapter of Ezekiel to justify his free-will-to-do-good notions, or the power of man to turn to God and save his soul is, of all creatures, in the most deplorable state of darkness.

Objection. But do not such passages as those in Hebrews 6:4, 6, and 10:38, 39; and 2 Peter 2:1, 18, 22, etc., go to disprove the doctrine?

Answer. By no means; there is an external sanctification spoken of in Scripture, such as is sometimes found in "dogs" and "swine". But take these passages in their greatest force, they prove nothing. There is not a word about those parties ever having had grace. They may have had eminent gifts; but gifts are not grace. There is nothing, in fact, here to show that anything beyond than an outward change had taken place upon them.

"The redeemed," says Witsius, "are sanctified, not only by a federal holiness, which gives a right to the sacraments in the visible Church, 1 Corinthians 7:14,[4] nor by that external holiness whereby one has "escaped the pollutions of the world through a knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ", 2 Peter 2:20, while yet he still retains his canine and

swinish nature, but by a true and thorough holiness, whereby righteousness and true holiness are brought into the soul, Ephesians 4:24.

All these things are to be well observed, lest anyone should object to us the case of either the covenant-breaking Israelites who were really chosen to the communion of an external covenant, but distinguished from those who were elected to glory, Romans 11:7, "or that of the false prophets who deny the Master who bought them", and who are far different from those whom not the master, but the Lord, not only bought for any kind of use, but redeemed by His precious blood, 1 Peter 1:18; or that of those branches of Christ who abide not in Him, but are cast forth and withered, John 15:6. For though they may be said to have been in Christ, as to the knowledge and profession of Him, and the external communion with the Church, the mystical body of Christ, and in so far, with Christ Him-self, yet they were always without the quickening communion of Christ, and the nourishment of His vivifying Spirit.

When we read, then, of those who "trample under foot the blood of the covenant by which they were sanctified", we are to bear in mind that there is an external sanctification, such as gives a right to outward Church privileges, as well as an internal sanctification, which alone is enjoyed by the true disciples of Christ.

Objection. But why pray to be kept from evil, from everlasting damnation, etc., etc., if it is decreed by God that we shall never perish?

Answer. The fact of the decree does not release any from continual dependence upon God. The renewed soul always recognizes the Sovereignty and Providence of Almighty God. It is true the Father has assured the children that they shall never want or fail, yet the children are not thereby released from seeking bread and strength from the Father's hand. No child will seek to be released though the parent had assured it a thousand times of its preservation, for there is always a sense of the relationship and position kept alive in the child's breast.

Then again, we have the examples of Christ, and of David, and Daniel, etc., etc., to warrant us in such prayers. Christ knew everything that had been decreed, and yet He prayed for the preservation of His people, John 17.

David set himself to prayer after it had been revealed to him that God would establish his house, 2 Samuel 7:27-29.

Daniel set his face unto the Lord God to seek by prayer and supplication the fulfilment of the Lord's promises concerning Jerusalem, after he positively knew that the time of the captivity had expired, Daniel 9:2, 3.

Objection. But David prayed that the Holy Spirit might not be taken from him, and hence we may conclude that it is possible to fall finally away.

Answer. Rash conclusion! David had foully sinned, and hence he might well begin to question whether he had ever been truly converted. And again, it is not only a revealed but an experienced fact that when a saint sins the Spirit is "grieved", and hides His face for a time. David might well pray, then, that the Lord would not altogether take His Spirit from him.

Objection. This doctrine leads to licentiousness.

Answer. "Dogs and swine" may so abuse it: but this is no proof that the "sheep" abuse it. For the same Spirit that calls effectually, promotes holiness, Acts 15:9; 1 Peter 1:22. It is an irrefragable fact that the clearer a saint beholds his interest in Christ, the more inflamed is his heart with love to God. As in nature, so in grace, where true love exists there is a horror of adultery.

Objection. In the 20th chapter of Acts, and 30th verse, the apostle foretells, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, etc." Hence we may conclude against the doctrine of final perseverance.

Answer. The objection is very weak. If any man would understand the apostle, he must put himself in the apostle's position, that is, addressing an assembly of professing believers, and with an eye to the future increase of their numbers. I can well realize this myself, addressing you all as a congregation of professors, whilst perhaps there are many amongst you nothing more. Now, when I speak to you as believers, I assure you of the infallibility of the doctrine of final perseverance. I assure you on the authority of God that you shall never perish; but when I begin to discriminate, and point out the difference between professors and possessors, I often say to you, "Some high-sounding professors, with a head knowledge of doctrine, but uninfluenced by the Spirit in their hearts, it is to be feared, are amongst our own selves, etc." Do I thereby shake the foundations of God? Do I thereby insinuate the possibility of one of Christ's sheep being lost? Surely not! It was precisely so with the apostle, but with this advantage, that he was permitted to prophesy as to the future of the Ephesian visible Church; I am not.

I humbly submit this suggestion to those who in reading the epistles are often puzzled in finding that whilst the writers in some places speak confidently and assuringly to those to whom they wrote, in other places threaten and forebode, and denounce. The apostles spoke or wrote to visible Churches in which were sound and unsound professors. We ministers of the present day do likewise. Hence our occasional apparent contradictions. See 1 John 2:19.

Objection. But we read in 2 Peter 2:1 of certain parties who "denied the Lord that bought them". Is not the possibility of falling from grace more than inferred from this?

Answer. Certainly not. The answer given to the immediately preceding

objection might be made available for this, remember the distinction between professors and believers, between a visible church and the invisible or mystical, but I cannot help quoting the following very ingenious solution to the difficulty, the author of which I know not even by name, viz.:

"In the first place, I must observe that the epistles of St. Peter were written to converted Jews, 1 Peter 1:1, compared with Acts 2:5-11. And this will more clearly appear by referring to 2 Peter 3:15, 16, "and account the long-suffering of the Lord salvation, even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him hath written to you. As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, etc."

Here Peter refers to Paul's epistle written to the Hebrews, distinguishing it from those written to the Gentile Churches. And it is necessary to observe this distinction in order to understand what is meant by 'denying the Lord who bought them'. Peter by this expression has reference to their deliverance from the land of Egypt, and doubtless had in his mind Deuteronomy 32:6, where Moses, speaking to Israel, saith, 'Is He not thy Father, who hath bought thee' (redeemed thee from the land of Egypt)? See also Deuteronomy 7:8, 13:5, 15:16.

"These false teachers, then, in denying the Lord Jesus Christ, denied the Father also (see 1 John 2:22, 23, and 5:9-11), who had redeemed them from the land of Egypt. This objected passage, then, has no reference whatever to the redemption by and through the blood of Jesus."

I have now done. That I have proved my case, I fancy you will readily grant, though you all, perhaps, may not be able to submit to the doctrines of sovereign grace. However, it is one thing what is true, another what men want to be true. Such is the hatred of the natural mind to God, that many men who are intelligent, and shrewd, and thoroughly capable of balancing the pros and cons of an ordinary question, will not admit that such or such has been proved, though it were demonstrated! No. Though an angel from heaven were to assert that Christ re-deemed but His own people, and that not one of them should ever perish, the natural man will not, cannot believe it. The thing is contrary to his nature, inconsistent with his experience, opposed to all he has conceived of justice, mercy, and holiness, and he is ready to trample in the dust those who hold or preach it! I know this.

But this does not alter or affect the eternal decree of God, for, "nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure; having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His", 2 Timothy 2:19; and though every preacher and minister in the kingdom, or in the world, taught differently, it is my duty to proclaim the Word as I have now laid it before you!

Be assured, if I were left to follow my own nature, I should preach very differently. I need hardly remind you that I have a heart to feel for the distress of poor humanity, and a hand always ready to relieve necessity, but

"I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God to do less or more of mine own mind, but what the Lord saith, that will I speak;" Numbers 24:13. O may that Lord, of His sovereign will, reveal these truths to the unawakened amongst you, and bless them with infinite blessing to those who already know them! Amen

[1] Genesis 31:38 This twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten.

39 That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night.

40 Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes.

[2] This passage has been much controverted: some affirm-ing that "the gates of hell", do not mean the hosts of Satan, but the gates of the grave or of death : but no matter which of the two was the meaning of the Lord, the assur-ance of the safety of the Church is by no means weakened: for if death or the grave shall not prevail against the Church, Satan shall not prevail : for death or the grave is Satan's stronghold. The Lord has overcome him who had the power of death, and forever released His redeemed ones from its jaws.

[3] I hold it to be awful blasphemy to suppose that it is possible for Christ to plead in vain at the Father's hands. I can have no hesitation in declaring before assembled worlds of any individual sinner — " Be assured, if Christ has ever interceded for you, you must be saved with an everlasting sal-vation! "

[4] I am aware that there is a certain party of Noncon-formists who will not have it that this text alludes to exter-nal sanctification, they explaining the word "holy" as meaning legitimate; but this will not stand the test of close criticism.

To be "sanctified", in this passage, meant, not to be made holy as the regenerate, or to be set apart for God as the visible Saint or Christian, but together with their yoke-fellow to be a holy root to produce a holy seed. By "holy" is meant federal holiness, to be reputed and re-ceived among the people of God who are holy. By "unclean" is meant a sinner of the Gentiles, an alien and stranger from the commonwealth of Israel. It seems

strange how any man can read Romans 9 and deny federal holiness, or external sanctification.

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