

**CHRIST THE END OF THE
LAW: BEING THE
PREFACE TO THE
GENEVA BIBLE OF 1550**

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Christ the End of the Law: Being the Preface to the Geneva Bible of 1550 by Jean Calvin

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JEAN CALVIN

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CHRIST the end of the LAW,



Being the

Preface to the Geneva Bible of 1550.

By

JOHN CALVIN.

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And the Goat shall Bear upon Him all their Iniquities.—Lev. xvi. 22.
CHRIST is the End of the Law for Righteousness to obey our Lord Christ.—Rom.
xviii. 4. He hath borne our Griets and Carried our Sorrows.—Isa. liii. 4.

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MDCCL.

CHASE the end of the LAW.

OD, the Creator, the very-perfect Maker of all things, made man as a Master-piece exhibiting a singular excellence beyond his other creatures, by which he had already shown himself to be more than admirable: for he formed him to His own likeness and image, in such manner that the light of His glory shone brightly in him.

ow, that which would have enabled man to remain in the condition in which he had been established, was that, in humility he should bow himself lowly before the Majesty of GOD, magnifying it with thanksgiving; and that, in himself he should not seek his own glory; but, considering that all things came from above, he should also always look above, to thank for them Our Sole GOD, to whom belongs the praise of them. But

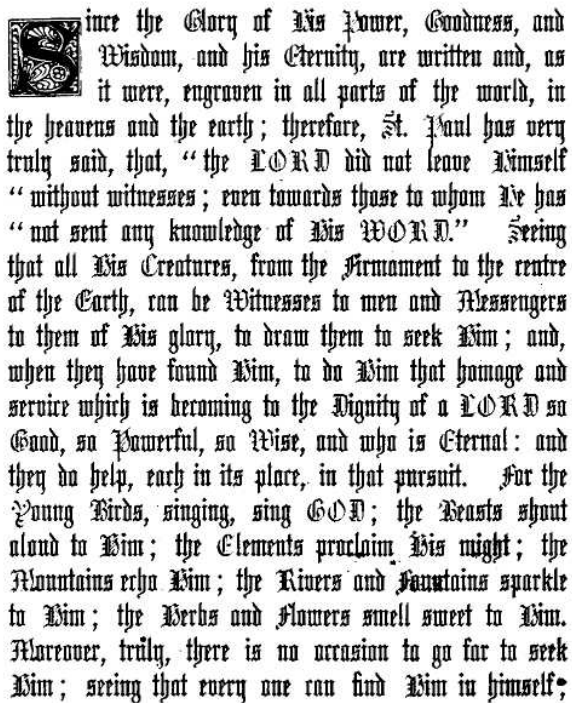
the wretched being, wishing to be something of himself, soon began to forget and to misunderstand from whence the good came to him; and by outrageous ingratitude essayed to elevate himself, and to puff himself up against his Creator, and the Author of all his unmerited benefits [graces]. From this cause he fell headlong into ruin: he lost all the dignity and excellence of his first Creation; he was despoiled and stripped of all his Glory; he was deprived of all the Gifts which had been entrusted to him: to the end that he might be confounded in his own Pride, and be, by force, made to learn that which he had refused to understand of his own will; namely, that he was only Vanity, and that he had never been anything else, except so far as his Creator had assisted and supported him in the state to which We had created him.

From that time GOD also began to hate the human race [except those whom We from that time made partakers of His mercy], and, as it well merited, We disavowed it as His work; seeing that His image and likeness was effaced from it, and that the gifts of

His goodness were no longer in it. And, as He had sent it forth and ordained it to please Himself and to take His delight in it, as a Father would take pleasure in his well-beloved child; so, on the contrary, He despised and abominated it, in such sort that all which had been pleasing to Him, now displeased Him: that in which He had taken delight, angered Him: that, which He had been used to contemplate with benign and parental regards, He now took to detest and to behold with regret. In short, the whole Man with all that belongs to him, his deeds, his thoughts, his words, his life, displeased GOD, as entirely as if he had been His special Enemy and Adversary; so that finally He said "He repented that He had made him."

Now, the Human Race, cast down into such confusion, has been fruitful in its cursed seed to beget a race like unto itself: that is to say Vicious, Perverse, Corrupt, Barren and Void of any Good, Rich and Abounding in Evil. Nevertheless, the LORD of Mercy, [who not only Loves, but, who is

Love and Pity itself,] wishing still, of His infinite Goodness, to love that which is no longer worthy of His Love, did not entirely consume lost and ruined man, as his Iniquity demanded; but in order to preserve the Human Race, as much to draw out from it his elect, as to render other men more inexcusable, has sustained and supported them in Tenderness and in Patience. And however much He might mystify and conceal Himself, [as if He would hide himself from them,] leaving them, for the most part, to follow the wishes and desires of their Cavetousness, without Law, without Direction, without other advice by His Word: nevertheless, He freely gave them [baillé] abundance of Warnings which ought to incite them to seek Him, and to endeavour to know and to honour Him as it behoves them to do. For, He has everywhere, in every place, and in every thing, raised His Ensigns and Standards under blazes of such bright Intelligence, that no one can justify his ignorance in not recognising One Sole Sovereign LORD, who has so widely displayed his Grandeur.



Since the Glory of His Power, Goodness, and Wisdom, and his Eternity, are written and, as it were, engraven in all parts of the world, in the heavens and the earth; therefore, St. Paul has very truly said, that, "the LORD did not leave Himself " without witnesses; even towards those to whom He has " not sent any knowledge of His WORD." Seeing that all His Creatures, from the Firmament to the centre of the Earth, can be Witnesses to men and Messengers to them of His glory, to draw them to seek Him; and, when they have found Him, to do Him that homage and service which is becoming to the Dignity of a LORD so Good, so Powerful, so Wise, and who is Eternal: and they do help, each in its place, in that pursuit. For the Young Birds, singing, sing GOD; the Beasts shout aloud to Him; the Elements proclaim His might; the Mountains echo Him; the Rivers and Fountains sparkle to Him; the Herbs and Flowers smell sweet to Him. Moreover, truly, there is no occasion to go far to seek Him; seeing that every one can find Him in himself;

inasmuch as we are all preserved and sustained by His Right dwelling in us.



Nevertheless, to manifest still more largely His Goodness and Infinite Clemency towards men, We did not rest satisfied with instructing them by such teachings as those already set forth; but, We in a special manner made His voice heard to a certain people, which, of His Good Will and Free Grace, We Elected and Chose from among all the nations of the Earth. It was the children of Israel to whom, by His Word, We clearly showed what We is; and by His marvellous Works showed what We can do: for We brought them out from subjection to Pharaoh king of Egypt [under whom they had been detained and oppressed], to free them and set them at liberty. Night and day We accompanied them in their flight; being, as it were, a Fugitive in the midst of them. We fed them in the Desert. We made them to possess the Promised Land. We gave them Victories and Triumphs into their hands." And, as if We were nothing to other nations, We wished to be, in