

**DISCOURSES ON THE  
COVENANT OF  
WORKS, THE FALL OF  
MAN AND ORIGINAL SIN**

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Discourses on the Covenant of Works, the Fall of Man and Original Sin by William Lusk

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**WILLIAM LUSK**

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OF THE  
**COVENANT OF WORKS,**  
THE  
**FALL OF MAN,**  
AND  
**ORIGINAL SIN.**

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**BY WILLIAM LUSK,**  
PASTOR OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE, N. Y.

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There is no fact, or truth in the Bible, which was designed to be a  
subject merely of speculative regard.

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## PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

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THE argument of the following discourses is drawn up, under a deep sense of the difficulty attending a satisfactory production ; and that arising, not merely from the state of theological opinion, but also, the extreme delicacy attending some points of argument, embraced in a complete view of the subject. Yet, great as the difficulty is, and to some minds, as disheartening as the attempt, I am fully convinced that a work of this nature is greatly needed : and am confirmed in the impression, not only by the wants of my own flock, and their expressed wishes in regard to it, but also, by the opinions of able men, and professors of theology in our country, with whom I have freely communicated. In a just view of the *design*, I am strongly assured, that a work of this character, comprising what is valuable on the topics it embraces ; excluding from it what is foreign and local ; and embodying a pointed, clear exposition and defence of the doctrine inculcated, cannot be an unacceptable offering to the public. Whether I have achieved the object in view, I am deeply aware, is for others to judge. With regard to myself, I can only say, if any other one would have performed the same task, I should most willingly have resigned my charge to his disposal. But having consented to the publication of this work, it is fit to acknowledge, that my best wishes are answered, if the reasoning embraced in it be satisfactory in the main ; and if, in other respects, I escape

a charge so justly made by many, as connected with ephemeral notices on the same points, of prying into things which are unrevealed, and apparently at least, darkening the counsel of the Most High, by the reveries of a "vain and deceitful" philosophy.

But while in the present design, I will keep within the sphere of legitimate information, I am admonished that the subject of inquiry is one of a fertile nature. Taken as a whole, it is well denominated the disease—the *ruined state of man*! And viewed as concerned with the relations between man and the spiritual creation, it is one of inexhaustible import; and must lie at the bottom, not merely of what is now agitated in our land, but of all correct, spiritual understanding of the scriptures. A fact, of which I am so deeply apprised, that in a thorough investigation, I resolved, treating professedly of the disease, to restrict my remarks mainly to *that* thing: and with respect to the remedy, particularly the disputed ground on which it is administered, I considered it ill advised to mingle with it much of what is freely and warmly contested.

I remark that this work treats particularly of the *disease*. It conveys a sensation to my heart of painful interest, as connected with the manner in which subjects of this nature are treated by many people. I regard not so much the peculiar garb, in which they stand forth in religious periodicals, or even the *Germanizing* character of some preaching among us, though it savors little enough of Christ-like simplicity, but rather a certain *morbid appetite*, by which some, who profess even a "form of sound words," are indisposed to candid inquiry. The case of such, I think, is much to be lamented.



They are instantly alarmed if any thing is offered concerning our lost estate, as though we were obstinately bent, notwithstanding we ever assert his moral *capacity*, of abasing man below the infinite demerit of his own folly. A posture of things that clearly subjects them to a double condemnation. For while they are inconsistent with their professed faith, it is plain that they overlook the grand point, without which, there can be no just impression of the remedy ; and in the consequence of it, become foolishly averse to any thing, which could awaken a holy zeal in their hearts, or convey to the intellect a new apprehension upon a theme of unrivalled solemnity.

Yet, whatever is proposed for the regard of the reader, if founded in scripture, will challenge a respect ; and by the judgment there passed, if it describe our state sufficiently, we must all abide, if its judgment be supposed to be according to truth. Impressed myself with that conviction, I resolved, that the evidence of the work should rest on a close exposition of the inspired volume. A course, of which the propriety is evident ; and not only in this instance, but generally so, where topics are discussed, which are certainly a matter of inspired asseveration.

If that be allowed in regard to their character, it is manifest, not only as the word of God is an infallible guide to us, but as the views cherished of one part will exert an influence on the understanding in regard to the whole system of revealed truth. An intimation of which is given us by our gracious Master, when referring to a certain sect among the Jews, he spake of their doctrine, making it truly of the *nature of leaven* ; and

advised his disciples to beware of it, lest a spice of error in its influence on the mind, should beguile them away from the simplicity of sanctified attainments.

At the same time, while a primary regard is due to the oracles of divine truth, I designed however in this attempt to pay *some* regard to the opinions of the devout and excellent of the earth. To the concurrent testimony of those who have agreed essentially in the faith inculcated; especially, to the doctrine asserted in the various standards of the Protestant Reformed Church. For the sense entertained by other persuasions is always a desirable fact, with those who respect the character of their fellow servants and companions in the school of the same Lord.\*

\* Of the standards or confessions of the reformed churches, on points of doctrine, I shall cite the following: Those of Augsburg, the Second Helvetic, the French, Articles of the Church of England, the Belgic, the Bohemian or Waldenses, Articles of Dort, the Wesminster and the Savoy Confessions. And some historical notice of them I add here, taken from a harmony of Confessions recently published in Utica, in connexion with the Acts of the Synod of Dort.

#### I. THE AUGSBURG.

"This confession was drawn up at the suggestion of the protestant princes, by Melancthon, under the direction of Luther; and was presented to the Emperor, Charles V., at the Diet of Augsburg, in the year 1530. It has been generally received and adopted as the confession of faith of all the Lutheran Churches in Europe and America."

#### II. THE SECOND HELVETIC.

"The first Helvetic confession was framed at the requisition of the rulers and Senate of Basil, by the delegates of the Helvetic States, which had embraced the evangelical doctrine, in the year 1536, and was sent and presented to the assembly of Divines at Wertemberg, by Bucer and Capito. But when the first confession was too short it was written over and enlarged in 1566 by the Pastors of Zurich, and was approved and subscribed unto, not only by the Tigurines, (i. e. the

With this declaration of my purpose, I close these suggestions with intimating : That the *argument* of the work agrees substantially with the following authors : Witsius, De Moor on Mark, Turretine ; A. Gibs Boston and Colquhoun on the Covenant of Works ; Edwards on Original Sin, Marrow of Modern Divinity, Bates, Brown, Ridgley, Toplady, Berry-street Sermons,

Canton of Zurich) but by their confederates of Bern, and Schaffhausen ; and Sangallis, Rhetia, Mylhansia, and Bienna, of the Griacon league ; and by the churches of Geneva, of Savoy, of Polonia, of Hungary, and of Scotland."

### III. THE FRENCH.

"It was drawn up and adopted by a Synod held in Paris in 1558, and presented to Francis II, King of France, in behalf of all his protestant subjects."

### IV. ARTICLES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

"They were agreed upon by the Arch-bishops, Bishops and Clergy, of England and Ireland, in the convocation holden at London, in the year 1562, for the avoiding diversities of opinions, and for the establishing of consent touching true religion. They, 39 in all, were also established by a convocation of the bishops, clergy, and laity, as the articles of faith, of the *Protestant Episcopal Church in the U. States*, in the year 1801."

### V. THE BELGIC.

"This confession was first published in the French language, in the year 1563, in the name of all the churches of Belgia ; and was confirmed and adopted by the Synod of their churches in 1579, and rendered and published in the Dutch language. The confession and catechism of the Belgic churches, and the canons of Dort, have been adopted as the faith of the reformed churches of the Netherlands. And these again have been received and adopted in this country, as the confession of faith of the American "*Reformed Protestant Dutch Church*."

### VI. THE BOHEMIAN, OR WALDENSES.

"This was drawn up in the year 1573, and was highly approved by Luther Melancthon, and the whole university of Wirtemberg."