

# **An epistle to all Christians, Jews, and Gentiles, showing how that God dwells not in temples made with hands.**

By George Fox

'Thus said the Lord, heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: where is the house that you will build unto me, and where is the place of my rest?' This the Lord said unto the Jews that built the temple. Isaiah 66:1.

And Solomon said, 'The heaven of heavens cannot contain God,' how much less the house that he built? 1 Kings 8:27, 2 Chr 6:18.

And again, Steven said to the Jews' high-priest, when he was examining him, 'Though Solomon built an house for the Lord; however the Most High dwells not in temples made with hands; for heaven is God's throne, and earth is his footstool; what house will you build me, said the Lord, or where is the place of my rest? Has not my hands made all these things? You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in hearts and ears, you do always resist the holy ghost; as your forefathers did, so do you.'

Now here all may see, that it was the stiff-necked and uncircumcised in hearts and ears, that were the persecutors, as in the next verse, that did resist the holy ghost; and therefore their bodies, in that state, were not like to be temples of the holy ghost; as in 1 Cor 6:19. And, therefore, these persecutors that did resist the holy ghost, which comes from the Father and the son, were the criers up of the outward temple; they were not like to see God, as Steven did, who dwells not in the temples made with hands, and heaven to be his throne, and earth his footstool, who resists his holy spirit that proceeds from him, by which God is seen and known.

And the apostle Paul said, 'God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwells not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he gives to all, life, and breath, and all things, and has made of one blood

all nations of men, for to dwell on the face of the earth. That they should seek the Lord, if happily they might feel after him, and find him, though he is not far from every one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being,' Acts 17:24-28.

So you may see, here are many witnesses before-mentioned, that God that made the world, and all things therein, who is Lord of heaven and earth, dwells not in temples made with hands, but as the prophets, Christ, and the apostles say, 'heaven is God's throne, and the earth is his footstool.' Mat 5:34-35.

So, all come to know God, who has made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth; he gives to you all life and breath, and all things; I say, all to know him by his spirit which he pours upon all flesh, heaven to be his throne, and earth to be his footstool; yes, all that dwell upon the face of the earth, know the earth that you dwell upon, and walk upon, to be God's footstool, and heaven to be his throne, who is Lord of heaven and earth, who gives you breath and life, and pours his spirit upon you, or in you, Joel 2, Acts 2. That with his spirit you may know the day has come that Joel spoke of; and that with his spirit you may all know that God has poured his spirit upon you, or in you, that with it you may live in God, and move in God, and have your being in God, who is Lord of heaven and earth; and heaven is his throne, and earth is his footstool, upon which face of the earth you dwell, and walk. So all to see and know that you are the temples of the living God, as God has said, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.' 2 Cor 6:16, Lev 26:12.

And thus said the Lord, who dwells not in temples made with hands, but the saints that are lead by the holy ghost are the temples of God and the holy ghost; for the Lord said, 'the children of Israel and Judah had provoked him to anger with the works of their hands.' The Lord said, 'For this city, (Jerusalem, and the temple,) has been to me a provocation of my anger, and of my fury, from the day that they built it, even unto this day, (Jerusalem, and the temple,) that I should remove it from before my face, (said the Lord,) and destroy it,' Jer 32:30-31.

So you may see here, that such as resisted the holy ghost, were crying up outward Jerusalem, and the outward temple, who were the stiff-necked persecutors, and uncircumcised in hearts and ears, as you may see in the prophet's time, and in Isaiah's time, and in Christ's, Steven's, and the apostle Paul's time; and such uncircumcised in hearts and ears, that are persecutors, that did and do resist the holy ghost now, are crying up outward temples, and imprisoning, and persecuting, and seizing property of people now, because they will not give money to mend their temples or churches, though they make no use

of them; and yet they say, the gates of hell shall not prevail against their church; and yet daily want repairing, either by reason of weather, storms, or thunder!

And though the Lord tells them by his prophet, and Steven, and his apostles, 'that God that made the world, and all things therein, dwells not in temples made with hands, but heaven is his throne, and earth is his footstool, and he is the Lord of heaven and earth.' And said of his people in these words, 'What? do you not know that your bodies are the temples of the holy ghost, which is in you, which you have of God.' And again, 'For you are the temples of the living God, as God has said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people, and I will be a Father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, said God Almighty.' Jer 31:33. And, therefore, all that receive the holy ghost, know your bodies to be the temples of the living God, and this holy ghost, and heaven to be God's throne, and earth his footstool, and that you dwell and walk upon his footstool, and that you do live and move, and have your everlasting being in God, who dwells not in temples made with hands; but God dwells and walks in you his temple, and he is your God and Father, and you are his people, and the sons and daughters of God Almighty. So that every one may truly say, I live, and move, and have my being in God; heaven is his throne, and earth is his footstool, which I naturally dwell and walk upon, and, spiritually, in God I live, and move, and have my being, to his praise and glory, who is the Lord of all, both in heaven and earth, from everlasting to everlasting, blessed and praised forever. Amen.

One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Eph 4:6. May all people know [witness by seeing] God the Father so to be.

*George Fox*

*The 4th of the 7th Month, 1682*

And From George Fox's Journal:

As I went towards Nottingham on a First-day in the morning, with Friends to a meeting there, when I came on the top of a hill in sight of the town, I saw the great steeple-house: and the Lord said unto me, 'You must go cry against that distant **great idol**,\* and against the worshippers inside.' I said nothing of this to the Friends, but went with them to the meeting, where the mighty power of the Lord God was among us; in which I left Friends sitting in the meeting, and went to the steeple-house.

\* *Site Editor's Note:* The Lord has referred to the church building, the steeple-house, as **a great idol**. An idol is something people venerate; something they take pride in. The temple in Jerusalem was the **only temple God** ever wanted

or **commanded**. Church buildings, cathedrals, and such monuments to man's pride are not wanted by God and contemptible in his sight, for the Most High does not dwell in houses and temples made with hands, Acts 7:48-9. He wishes to dwell in you with Christ in his glorious Kingdom - after you are purified.

When I came there all the people looked like fallow ground, and the priest, like a great lump of earth, stood in his pulpit above: he took for his text these words of Peter, ' We have also a more sure word of prophecy, which you do well to heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.' He told the people this was the scriptures, by which they were to try all doctrines, religions, and opinions. Now the Lord's power was so mighty upon me, and so strong in me, that I could not hold; but was made to cry out, 'Oh! no, it is not the scriptures;' and told them what it was, namely, the holy spirit, by which the holy men of God gave forth the scriptures, whereby opinions, religions, and judgments were to be tried; for it led into all truth, and so gave the knowledge of all truth. For the Jews had the scriptures, yet resisted the holy ghost, and rejected Christ, the bright morning-star, and persecuted Christ and his apostles, and took upon them to try their doctrines by the scriptures, but erred in judgment, and did not try them aright, because they tried them without the holy ghost.

*Concerning persecution in all ages to this day. How he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born of the Spirit; and even so it is now: yes, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution, 2 Tim 3:12. Mark, all those who will live godly; not those who will live ungodly, out of Christ Jesus. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake, Phil 1:29.*

—By G. F.

The spirit itself bears witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God; if children, then heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. And if so, should we suffer with Christ, that we may be also glorified together; for I reckon, that the present sufferings of this time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? as it is written, 'For Christ's sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter; no, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Christ that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

Here is and ought to be the noble resolution of the true and faithful christians in Christ Jesus; and as the apostle said to the Corinthians, We are made a spectacle unto the world, and angels, and men, &c. And we are counted fools for Christ's sake, and we are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; and being reviled, we bless; and being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat. We are made as the filth of the world, and as the offscouring of all things; but the Lord comforts us in all our tribulations; for as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds with Christ,' 1 Cor 4:8-18, 2 Cor 1:4-5.

And so it is no new thing for the christians now, to be troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair, for our light afflictions which are but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; 'and though our outward man perish, yet our inward man is renewed day by day.' Blessed be the Lord forever.

And as the apostle said, 'I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake.' And here the apostle triumphed over all, which should be every true Christian's practice.

And you may read how Paul said, 'How that beyond measure he persecuted the church of God, and wasted it; but when he was converted and became a member of Christ's church, then he preached that faith which he sought to destroy; so you may see, as it is written, 'he that's born after the flesh, persecutes him that is born after the spirit;' even so it is now. Therefore, whatever Christendom professes and talk about, the birth must be minded, of what birth you are; if it be the birth of the flesh, he will persecute him that is born after the spirit, the true believers in Christ; for 'unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.' So this gift is not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake, and so count all things but loss for the excellence of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, 'for whom I suffer the loss of all things, and count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.' To this all should mind to be conformable, and know the fellowship in his sufferings.

And the apostle encourages the Thessalonians, who said, 'We ourselves glory in you, ... for your patience, and faith in all your persecutions, and tribulations, that you endure, which is a manifest token of the righteous judgments of God, that you may be worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer, seeing it is righteous with God to recompense to those who trouble you; and so you that are troubled, rest with us, (said the apostle), therefore brethren, we are comforted over you in all your afflictions and distresses for your faith. Stand fast in the Lord, that no man should be moved by these afflictions, for yourselves know that

we are appointed thereunto, (said the apostle), for we told you before that we should suffer tribulations, even as it is come to pass.' For Christ has suffered; and being tempted, he is able to succor those who are tempted, in all their sufferings. And though Christ were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered, and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation, to all them which obey him; and so if we suffer with him, we shall reign with him. And remember those who are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body, in bonds. Here is a sensible feeling of one another that are born of the spirit, and a fellowship in sufferings, who are persecuted by that spirit born of the flesh.

And the apostle said to the Hebrews, 'Call to remembrance the former days, in which after you were illuminated, you endured a great fight of afflictions, partly while you were gazing-stocks, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly while you became companions of those who were so used; for you had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that you have in heaven a better and enduring substance. Cast not away your confidence, which has great recompense of reward, for you have need of patience, that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise; but if any draw back, (namely, in the time of sufferings), the Lord's soul has no pleasure in them.'

Moses, by faith, chose rather to 'suffer afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of reward, and by faith forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible.' And you may see what cruel trials of mockings, scourges, bonds, and imprisonments, and afflictions, and torments, the saints went through, in Heb 11.

And said Peter, 1 Pet 2:20. 'If when you do well, and suffer for it, you take it patiently; this is acceptable with God, for even hereunto were you called. If a man for conscience sake towards God suffer grief; this is thank-worthy, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps, who when he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to God who judges righteously; for Christ has once suffered for -in, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Forasmuch then as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin. But the God of all grace who has called us into his eternal glory, (said the apostle), by Christ Jesus, after that you have suffered awhile, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you; cast all your care upon God, for he cares for you; and rejoice, inasmuch as you are made partakers of Christ's sufferings, ... and think it not strange concerning the fiery trials, which are to try

you, as though some strange thing had happened unto you; for if you be reproached and suffer for the name of Christ, happy are you, for the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you: on their part, he is evil spoken of, but on your part, he is glorified.' If any man suffer as a christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf: wherefore let those who suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as to a faithful Creator; and if you suffer for righteousness sake, happy are you. And 'be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled, having a good conscience, that whereas they speak evil of you, as evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conduct; for it is better if the will of God so be, that you suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing; for we both labor and suffer reproach because we trust in the living God, who is the savior of all men, especially of those who believe.'

And the apostle said, 'He was appointed a teacher of the Gentiles, for the which cause he also suffered,' but he was not ashamed, for he knew in whom he believed; and said, though he suffered as an evildoer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound; no, the eternal word of God that lives, and abides, and endures for ever, by which all things were made and created, this word of God cannot be bound by that which was created by it, and does not live and endure for ever; therefore, said the apostle, 'I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. It is a faithful saying, if we be dead with Christ, we shall also live with him; and if we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with him; and if we deny him, he also will deny us,' ...

And you may see what persecutions and afflictions came upon the apostle at Antioch, and at Iconium, and at Listra, what persecutions he endured; but out of them all the Lord delivered him; yes, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. **Mark, shall, if they live godly.** But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived; therefore he exhorts Timothy, to 'watch in all things, and endure afflictions,' ... for he was ready to be offered up, for the time of his departure was at hand, and he had fought the good fight, and finished his course, and kept the faith, and there was a crown of righteousness laid up for him, which the Lord, the righteous Judge will give him at the last day, and not to him only, but unto all them also that love his appearing; for God has not given to us a spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind: therefore the apostle said unto Timothy, 'Be not you therefore ashamed of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but be you a partaker of the affliction for the gospel, according to the power of God, who has saved us, and called us by a holy calling,' ... And John said, 'I know your works, tribulations, and poverty; but you art rich; fear none of those things which you shall suffer. Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that you may be tried, and you shall have tribulation ten days; but be you faithful to death, and I

will give you a crown of life:' this was spoken to the church in Smyrna. And you may see in the 11th chap. how the witnesses of Christ suffered, and when they had taken away their lives, and the dead bodies lay in the streets of the great city, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, (so not naturally called so), where Christ our Lord and savior was crucified; that was the great professors of the letter, the Jews, before the witness was slain; but after three days and a half, the spirit of life from God entered into the witnesses, and they stood upon their feet, which frightened their enemies; and the witnesses were called up to heaven, and the same hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and was shaken down; so here was the reward upon the city and the persecuting citizens.

And again, you may see how the dragon persecuted the woman, the true church, which brought forth the man child, after he was cast out of heaven by Michael and his angels; but the woman (or true church) was nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, in the wilderness; and the earth helped the woman; and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood, which the dragon cast out of his mouth after her; and the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which kept the commands of God, and have the testimony of Jesus.

Now you may see how the devil, the dragon, and all his followers persecute, and what his wrath is against, the true church, the woman, that brought forth the man child, and those who kept the commands of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. And then the dragon he gave his wicked persecuting power to the beast, and he also was to continue forty-two months; and he got up in such a rage in the devil's power, that he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven; not those who dwell upon the earth, for all that dwell in the earth worship him, but those whose names are written in the book of life of the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world, namely, they do not worship him. He that has an ear to hear, let him hear.

But what became of the great city, and the whore, or the false church, and the beast, and the dragon, with all his false prophets? are not they at the end burned, and cast into the lake of fire, and the Lamb and the saints have the victory?

And David declares, how he was persecuted, and said, 'Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul; let them be as chaff before the wind, ... Let their way be darkness, and slippery,... False witnesses rise up, and lay to my charge things that I knew not; they rewarded him evil for good, to the spoiling of his soul; and his adversaries gathered themselves together against him, with hypocritical mockery in feasts; they gnash upon me with their teeth,



yes, they open their mouths wide against me, and say, Aha, Aha, ... but God will save his afflicted people, and bring down the high looks of those who afflict them.' Psalm 18:27

And David mourned by reason of affliction, and said, 'I am afflicted, and ready to die from my youth upward,' ... and said, 'Lord remember David in all his afflictions;' and he said, 'The wicked in his pride persecuted the poor: my times are in your hand; O Lord! deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and those who persecute me.' And also David cried to the Lord, and said, 'How many are the days of your servant? wilt you execute judgment on those who persecute me? They persecute me wrongfully; help you me; the proud have dug a pit for me, which are not after your law;' (and those who do so now are not after your gospel.) And David said, 'O Lord my God! in you I put my trust; save me and deliver me from all those who persecute me; for the Lord hears the poor, and despises not the prisoners; let the heaven and earth praise him, the sea, and everything that moves therein.' And David said, 'those who sat in the gate spoke against me, and I was the song of the drunkards;' and do not the drunkards make songs of God's people now?

And you may see the sufferings and afflictions of Job by the Chaldeans, and Sabceans, and the trials and temptations of his wife, and his pretended friends; and also he said in his afflictions, 'those who are younger than I, have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flocks, the children of fools, children of base men; now am I their song, yes, I am their by-word, they abhor me, &c. and spare not to spit in my face; upon my right hand rise the youth, they put away my feet, they rise up against me, &c. they mar my path, and set forward my calamity,' ... But you may see how the Lord delivered Job out of all his afflictions and miseries; for it was always the wicked that abused the righteous, in their sufferings and afflictions.

And Jeremiah said, 'O Lord! my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction!' The Lord is the fortress, and refuge, and strength of all his people in the day of their afflictions, and persecutions; and did not the Lord confound all Jeremiah's persecutors? Did not Jeremiah tell his persecutors, 'The Lord is with me as a terrible one, therefore my persecutors shall stumble; and they shall not prevail, they shall be greatly ashamed, for they shall not prosper; and their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten?' And did not this come upon the persecutors that put Jeremiah in prison, and dungeon? Was not Jeremiah delivered? and his persecutors went into captivity, and he set at liberty from his prison. Jer 20:11, you may see what became of his persecutors, whether they did not go into captivity, and into prison.

And Isaiah, speaking by prophecy of Christ, how he was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; and was not he brought as a lamb to Pilate's, and

to the Jews' slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearers; and he was taken from prison, and from judgment; who shall declare the generation of the suffering lamb, slain from the foundation of the world; for the transgression of his people was he stricken. The smiters, and the afflictors, and the opposers, and imprisoners, despisers, and rejecters, cannot declare the generation of Christ the Lamb of God. And Isaiah said, 'If you loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burden, and let the oppressed go free, &c. if you draw out your soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall your light rise in obscurity.' But what will become of such that do oppress and lay their burdens, and afflict the just? Their light will be darkness. And the Lord said, speaking of the children of Israel, 'in all their afflictions, he was afflicted; and the angel of his presence saved them; Isa 63:9, in his love, and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bore them, and carried them all the days of old;' and God said, 'I sent my angel before you to keep you in the way,' Exod 22:20. And when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, he heard their voice, and delivered them from their persecutors, and afflictions. And the Lord said, 'I have surely seen the afflictions of my people, which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, by reason of their task masters; for I know their sorrows.' So here you may see the Lord does hear their cries, and is sensible of the afflictions and sorrows of his people, therefore commands his people, 'not to afflict the widow, nor the fatherless, nor the stranger; for if they did, they would cry unto the Lord, and he would make their wives widows, and their children fatherless.'

And Amos cried, 'Woe unto such that chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music like unto David, that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with chief ointments; but they are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph; for I know your manifold transgressions, and your mighty sin, they afflict the just;' and that is it that afflicts the just in our age, and are not sensible of the afflictions of Joseph, nor of the afflictions of the righteous in our age. And Christ said, 'And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cried day and night unto him?' And did not Christ tell the Jews, 'how they had slain and persecuted the prophets?' And he said, how that 'they should persecute his apostles and prophets?' And what are become of those persecuting Jews? And Christ said to his disciples, 'They shall lay hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the councils, and scourge you in the synagogues, and cast you into prison, being brought before kings and rulers for my name sake; and it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what you shall answer, for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, (said Christ), which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist.' Therefore it is good for all to look unto Jesus, both for wisdom and for strength in all their trials, and sufferings, and persecutions; for without him they can do nothing.

And Christ said, 'Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven; blessed are you when men shall revile and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake; rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. But I say unto you, love your enemies; bless those who curse you; do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who despitefully use you, and persecute you.' And Christ said to his disciples, 'You shall be hated of all men for my name sake: but he that endures to the end shall be saved; but when they persecute you in this city, flee you to another; for verily I say unto you, you shall not have gone over all the cities of Israel until the son of man come. But when they deliver you up, take no thought, how or what you shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour, what you shall speak; for it is not you that speak, but the spirit of the Father that speaks in you.' And further, Christ said to the Jews, 'Behold I send unto you prophets and wise men, and some of them you shall kill and crucify; and some of them you shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth,' ...

And also you may see how John Baptist was cast in prison, for reprovng of Herod: and his wife's daughter pleased Herod with her dancing, and Herod promised with an oath, to give her whatever she would ask, and her mother advised her to ask John Baptist's head, and she had it given her. Now this was the fruit of transgressing the law of God, and of her dancing, and oaths, and swearing, contrary to the command of Christ, who said, *swear not at all*.

And also, Christ said, 'I was hungry, and you gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink; I was naked, and you clothed me not; in prison, and you came not unto me; I was a stranger, and you took me not in; and sick, and you visited me not,' ... And Christ said, 'Inasmuch as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not unto me; and such shall go into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal.'

Is it not the practice of the professors these days, instead of clothing the naked, to take away their clothes? And take away their meat and drink, instead of giving them meat and drink? And cast into prison, instead of visiting them in prison? Yes, such as pretend to be preachers of the gospel, though they do not hear them; but such are transgressors of his command, who said, 'Freely you have received, freely give.'

And Ahab the king, said, 'Take Micah, the prophet and put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of afflictions until I come in peace;' and Micah said unto Ahab, 'If you return at all in peace, the Lord has not spoken by me.' So Ahab was slain, according to Micah's prophecy. 2 Chron 18:27.

And did not the prophet Hananii reprove Asa the king? And the king was in a great rage, and put the prophet in prison, because he reprov'd the king, who relied on the king of Assyria, and not on the Lord God? 2 Chron 16:7.

And you may see in the Acts, how the priests and the rulers cast the apostles into prison, and charged those who 'they should preach no more in the name of Jesus.' And Stephen said to the chief priest and the rulers, 'Which of the prophets have not your forefathers persecuted, and slain them which showed before the coming of the Just One, of whom you have been now the betrayers and murderers, who received the law, ... and have not kept it? When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and gnashed on him with their teeth, and stoned Stephen to death, Stephen calling upon God, saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit.'

And Paul said, 'I have persecuted this way (which was the way of true christianity) unto death, binding and delivering into prison both men and women; the high priest does bear me witness, and all the state of the elders, from whom also I received letters, and went unto Damascus to bring them which were there, bound unto Jerusalem for to be punished.' This was Paul's confession when he was converted, and persecuted for Christ's sake, by the old persecuting professing Jews.

And Herod persecuted the Christians, and killed James, and imprisoned Peter, whom an angel delivered through the prayers of the saints, and the angel of God struck Herod that he died miserably.

And you may see, in the 16th of the Acts, how Paul and Silas were cast into prison, and how the Lord worked a wonderful deliverance to his glory for them! And how often you see the Jews sought the life of Paul after he was converted; and the heathen Romans had more tenderness, who let him have liberty to dwell two full years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concerned the Lord Jesus; and no man forbade him.

And the Jews persecuted Jesus, because he had done good on the Sabbath day, who was Lord of the Sabbath. And Christ said to his disciples, the servant is not greater than his Lord; if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you, ... All these things will they do unto you for my name sake.'

And this persecution and imprisonment the apostles and the saints came to witness after Christ was risen; and therefore you may see in Paul's epistles he salutes his fellow prisoners, and the apostle said, 'He that is born of the flesh, persecutes him that is born of the spirit;' even it is now, each birth manifests both their works and fruits.

And the apostle said to the Corinthians, 'Give no offence in anyting, that the ministry be not blamed; but in all things approving ourselves, as the ministers of God, in much patience, in affliction, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fasts, by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the holy ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left; by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying and behold we live; as chastised, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things.' These are good examples for the true christians to follow. 2 Cor 6:5,11,27.

And do not you read what became of Jezebel, that persecutor of the Lord's prophets? And what is become of all the persecutors of God's people since the beginning? That birth born after the flesh, will it not have the same portion to the end of the world? Is it not recorded to be the birth of the flesh; and is not to inherit with the heir of the promise; but is shut out from that inheritance?

***George Fox***

*London, the 8th month, 1682*