

some part of the world, is an act of goodness, not of mercy...

5. By goodness is meant the bounty of God. This is the notion of goodness in the world; when we say a good man we mean either a holy man in his life, or a charitable and liberal man in the management of his goods.... The goodness of God is his inclination to deal well and bountifully with his creatures. It is that whereby he wills there should be something besides himself for his own glory. God is good in himself, and to himself, i.e. highly amiable to himself; and therefore some define it a perfection to God, whereby he loves himself and his own excellency; but as it stands in relation to his creatures, it is that perfection of God, whereby he delights in his works, and is beneficial to them. God is the highest goodness, because he doth not act for his own profit, but for his creatures' welfare, and the manifestation of his own goodness. He sends out his beams, without receiving any addition to himself, or substantial advantage from his creatures. It is from this perfection that he loves whatsoever is good, and that is, whatsoever he hath made, for "every creature of God is good." 1 Tim. 4:4....

6. The goodness of God comprehends all of his attributes. All the acts of God are nothing else but the effluxes of his goodness, distinguished by several names, according to the objects it is exercised about.... When Moses longed to see his glory, God tells him he would give him a prospect of his goodness: Exod. 33:19, "I will make all my goodness to pass before thee." His goodness is his glory and Godhead, as much as is delightfully visible to his creatures, and whereby he doth benefit man. "I will cause my goodness." or comeliness, as Calvin renders it, "to pass before thee:" What is this but the train of all his lovely perfections springing from his goodness? The whole catalogue of mercy, grace, long-suffering, abundance of truth, Exod. 34:6, is summed up in this one word. All are streams from this one fountain; he could be none of this were he not first good. When it confers happiness without merit, it is grace; when it bestows happiness against merit, it is mercy; when he bears with provoking rebels, it is long-suffering, when he performs his promise, it is truth; when it meets with a person to whom it is not obliged, it is grace; when he meets with a person in the world, to which he hath obliged himself by promise, it is truth; when it commiserates a distressed person, it is pity; when it supplies an indigent person, it is bounty; when it succours an innocent person, it is righteousness; and when it pardons a penitent person, it is mercy -- all summed up in this one name of goodness.... This attribute, saith one, is so full of God, that it doth deify all the rest, and verify the adorableness of him. His wisdom might contrive against us, his power bear too hard upon us; one might be too hard for an ignorant, and the other too mighty for an impotent creature; his holiness would scare an impure and guilty creature, but his goodness conducts them all for us, and makes them all amiable to us. Whatever comeliness they have in the eye of a creature,