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Outline: John Cotton, Gods Promise to his Plantations (1630/p. 1634)

I: **(Opening the text)** God encourages King David two ways:

1. Former favors
2. Continuing favors—five blessings promised by God to David
 - a. Will appoint a place
 - b. Will build him a house
 - c. Will accept a house from Solomon
 - d. Will be a father to David's son
 - e. Will establish throne of his house for ever
3. Double blessing promised in verse 10:
 - . Designation of place for God's people
 - a. Plantation of them in that place, with ensuing 3fold blessing:
 - i. They will dwell like freeholders (landowners)
 - ii. They will move no more
 - iii. They will dwell in peace

II: **(Use One)** From this first (3a) blessing, it follows: "The placing of a people in this or that country is from the appointment of the Lord."

1. Wherein does this work of God stand in appointing a place for a people?"
 - a. When God discovers a land for a people
 - b. When God brings people to a land
 - c. When God makes room for a people to dwell, which He can do in 3 ways:
 - i. By casting out the enemies of a people by lawful war
 - ii. By purchase or gift
 - iii. By making the country, 'though not altogether void of inhabitants, void in that place where they reside.' Thus "in a vacant soil, he that taketh possession of it, and bestoweth culture and husbandry upon it, his right it is." See Gen 1:28 and Gen 9:1
2. This placing of people in this or that Country, is from Gods sovereignty over all the earth, and inhabitants thereof. God's people take the land by promise, cf. Canaan.
God's people discern this promise
 - . By discerning themselves to be in Christ
 - a. By finding His holy preference with them

III: **(Question)** How shall I know whether God hath appointed me to such a place, if I be well where I am, what may warrant my removal?

1. Four or five good things, the procurement of which warrant removal
 - a. To gain knowledge
 - b. To further Business and trade
 - c. To plant a colony—like bees hiving off
 - d. To employ talents better
 - e. To seek liberty from unjust laws
2. Some evil things, the avoidance of which warrant removal
 - . Grievous sins overspreading a country
 - a. To satisfy burdensome debts
 - b. To escape persecution

- 3. Special providences or particular cases
 - . Command of sovereign
 - a. Special providence of God, revealed in 3 ways
 - i. God inclines the heart of man
 - ii. God gives other men hearts to call us
 - iii. God undoes our ties to one place, and makes room for us in another.

IV (**Use 2**) We must acknowledge God as our landlord, viz

- 1. We must seek after the Lord
- 2. We must feel after the Lord, and labor to be obedient
- 3. We must labor to find him in his ordinances

V (**Use 3**) When God makes room for you, learn to walk thankfully before him, and offer yourselves to His service.

VI (**Observation #2**) A people of Gods plantation shall enjoy their own place with safety and peace.

VII (**Question**) What is it for God to plant a people?

- 1. A metaphor from farming-God's people will be rooted in a fit place.
 - a. When he causes God's people to grow as plants do.
 - b. When he causes them to fructify
 - c. He plants them, and does not root them up.
 - d. More especially

i. Temporal:

- 1. They will have what they had in their old land
- 2. Their estates will increase in the new land

ii. Spiritual:

- 1. They will become trees of righteousness, a choice generation
- 2. When he plants us, he roots us in Christ
- 3. When he giveth us to grow up in Him as calves in the stall
- 4. To bring forth much fruit
- 5. To continue to abide in a state of grace, to plant us in his holy sanctuary

VIII (**Reason 1** [for observation #2])

- 1. From God's acceptance of David's intent to build a house for God.
- 2. From the office God takes when he is our planter
- 3. From the nature of the blessing He confers upon us.

IX (**Question**) How was this promise fulfilled by the people, seeing after this time they met with many persecutions...?

- 1. After David's time, more settled than before
- 2. These promises were fulfilled to the godly
- 3. Promise stipulates that others will not wrong them, not that they cannot wrong themselves

X (Use 1) To exhort all that are planted at home, or intend to plant abroad... look that you be right planted, so that you will not be afflicted nor moved.

XIII (Question) What course would you have us take?

1. Have special care that you ever have the ordinances planted among you
2. Have care that you are implanted into the ordinances, that the word might be ingrafted into you, and you into it.
3. Be not unmindful of Jerusalem at home
4. Go forth with a public spirit—look not on your own things only, but also on the things of others
5. Look after your children, so that they do not degenerate
6. Offend not the poore natives—as you reap their temporals, so feed them with your spirituals

XIV (Use 2) Let the name of the Lord be your strong tower.